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Stri Dharma

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

Indian Delegates at the Women's Congress in Rome

Over a thousand women from 43 lands gathered in Rome in May for the ninth Congress of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance. Forty nations were represented. In twenty-five of them women are already voters on the same terms as men, but the women of fifteen are still waiting for their enfranchisement. It was the first time India was represented as amongst the progressive countries and the eight Indian delegates came from Madras, Bombay and the United Provinces, each of which has already granted votes to their women on equal terms. It is a matter for great congratulation and pride that India was able to stand right in the forefront of nations which honour their women with citizenship. The European papers all comment on the great impression made by the Eastern delegates at the opening meetings. The picturesque variety of the national costumes gave colour to the gatherings and made one realise the strength of the bond that had drawn all these women together from the far corners of the earth. There were women present from Australia, South Africa, Egypt, Japan, China, India, Palestine, North and South America and all the European countries.

Two of our Indian delegates, Mrs. Jinarajadasa and Mrs. H. A. Tata, spoke for five minutes each at the special gathering to welcome the countries newly enfranchised since the last Congress. It is interesting to note that Ireland and India, which have so much in common, have freed their women at the same time.

News from a Representative

Mrs. Jinarajadasa promises *Stri Dharma* an article on the Congress for next issue, but in the meantime Mrs. Tata has written as follows during the progress of the proceedings: "The Indian delegates came into the category of the enfranchised parts of India as the International Alliance has now made it part of its policy to divide the enfranchised and the non-enfranchised countries into two sections. A big procession was formed of the delegates on the morning of the 17th May to see Signor Mussolini, the Prime Minister of Italy, and each delegation passed by him in his office. A long circuit was made by the procession of the countries which was formed in alphabetical order and which looked very imposing. The Congress was opened by Signor Mussolini later, who said he was not against granting votes to the women of Italy, but his Government would begin by first extending to them the Municipal vote which they do not yet possess.

The whole Congress was very impressive. Business was done from 9-30 to 10 o'clock and from 3 to 5 P. M. or sometimes 6-30. Each evening functions were arranged from 9 to 11 P. M. The Mayor of Rome, the citizens of Italy and the Italian Women's Committee gave social parties at the historic sites of Rome, such as the Palatine Hill. At the meeting on the latter Signor Mussolini shook hands with the Indian delegation and we were photographed and cinematographed many times. On the 11th a luncheon party was arranged at Mount Mario where there is an International College with nine different nationalities. Various speeches were made there welcoming us delegates. The ideal of the College is to spread Internationalism, good will, and love for other nations.

France, Italy, Switzerland and South America are still unenfranchised and the Women's Alliance is going to pay special attention to these countries before the next Congress meets. China and Japan were also represented by one delegate each."

A Call to the Backward Indian Councils

Mrs. Tata very wisely goes on to say: "We would like to see the whole of India enfranchised before the next Congress meets in 1926, when there is sure to be some change in the policy and administrative methods of this great Alliance, so it is very important that the unenfranchised Indian Provinces should come into line with all the other countries in the matter of women's votes. We cannot show only the parts of India which have been favourable to women, although half of India is still dormant on the subject. It will be a great pity if India lags behind other countries during the coming year, and if it does not occupy a full equal status with the others by next Congress. It is time for the Central Provinces and the Punjab to make a move and give woman suffrage."

The Demands of the Congress Women

The women assembled at Rome passed Resolutions claiming equal pay for equal work, and claiming the right of married women to work; they declared their belief in equal education and training for women, in the opening of all professions to women, in the opening to them of the Civil Service

and the right of advancement to higher posts. They pledged the Alliance to National and International action to secure the right of the married woman to retain or choose her own nationality. They resolved that husband and wife should have the right of free enjoyment of their respective earnings and incomes, and a wife should have the right to share in the income of the husband. They called for the maintenance of widows and mothers by the State or the Municipality, and finally they urged all nations to join the League of Nations as the best means of ending War.

The Passing Away of a Woman Martyr

By the early death of Lady Constance Lytton the world of women has suffered a great loss. She was one of the pioneer militant suffragettes of England and suffered untold horrors of forcible feeding in her second imprisonment for the woman suffrage cause when she disguised herself as a factory girl so that her rank should get her no easy treatment. Her book "Prisons and Prisoners" is one of the most beautiful and saintly in the English language. She was the sister of the Earl of Lytton, Governor of Bengal, who was deeply shocked and grieved by the news of her sudden death. She was beloved by all who knew her for her pure, gentle spirit consecrated to the service of women and outcasts. She often sent cuttings for the help of *Stri Dharma*, which she read regularly, for her sympathies were much with Indian women.

Illness of Dr. Annie Besant

For over three weeks Dr. Besant was confined to her room by an attack of blood-poisoning consequent on the bite on her ankle of some venomous insect. It was a very anxious time for her friends as at any moment it might have taken an entirely dangerous turn Fortunately Mrs. Besant's strength of constitution and purity of physique, through her 40 years of vegetarianism and her simplicity of life, enabled her to make a recovery wonderful for her age—74— and she is now able to resume her work and travelling, though in a distinctly weakened condition. The good wishes of all our readers will go out to her for complete restoration of strength and a new lease of the life that is so dedicated to the furtherance of India's best interests.

H. E. Lady Willingdon and the Madras Women's Home of Service

Every scheme for the improvement of Indian women's lives is sure of the sympathy of Lady Willingdon, the wife of the Governor of Madras. She has this month sent a donation of Rs. 250 to the W. I. A. Women's Home of Service with a cheery letter of encouragement and promise of personal interest in the scheme.

It must have been with special pleasure that Her Excellency opened on the 10th July, a Madras Medical School for Women which is to blossom ater into a Women's Medical College, for only through better education and better hygiene will women's advancement come in this country, and no one presses home this truth more than Her Excellency. Such women as Lady Minto, Lady Hardinge and Lady Willingdon endear themselves to their Indian sisters.

Simla Women's Hospital

For fifteen years the local medical officers and philanthropists have been anxious to provide a hospital for women in Simla, but it was Lady Reading's good karma to be the person to announce that she had resolved to carry through the proposal of making a free gift to the town of Simla of a model, up-to-date women's hospital within as short a time as it was possible to raise funds and select a site. This has since been secured at Bairdville, and the foundation stone was laid by Her Excellency on the 15th June. The hospital, will accommodate 50 or 60 patients in the beginning and is well endowed out of the Lady Reading Women of India Fund, the Begum of Bhopal alone having given a generous gift of Rs. 40,000 towards the building. There is a crying need everywhere in India for women's hospitals, better trained mid-wives and more hospital nurses.

Village Education

A Conference on Elementary Education which was held in Ootacamund to enquire into primary education in the Madras Presidency revealed the appalling fact that there are over 4000 villages, each with a population of over 500, which have *no* school facilities. It was resolved that a programme of starting schools in these villages should be worked out within three years, and the opening of schools in smaller villages should be carried out in ten years. It is very necessary that this programme should be made out in such terms as to include the little girls of all these villages as well as the boys. In Madras Presidency there is no purdah system and there is no difficulty raised against boys and girls under ten years old attending the same school and being taught by the same teacher. The sisters and brothers will go off to school naturally together if only no restrictions are put in the way by the educational authorities. Constantly the school is called "Boy's School" and this prevents the girls attending it. We thinking and patriotic women call on the Government to drop entirely this term "Boys' School" in elementary education. Let the schools be for *the children* without sex partiality and sex differentiation. The educational authorities should encourage the parents to send along their little girls. Educate the future mother and you educate the future family. Educate the future father and you educate only a single overworked unit whose work takes him largely away from the family in its most receptive years. The women in every town and village should claim these proposed schools for their girls as well as their boys.

Votes for Women discussed on the Himalayas

Those who know how keen Mrs. Cousins is on woman suffrage will smile to learn that during her holiday this subject came up for discussion in Darjeeling quite without any previous arrangement with her, but still she found herself the principal speaker for the cause on the slopes of the Himalayas. The Darjeeling Municipality has been subject to criticism for some time and the local Ratepayers' Association called a public Meeting in the Darjeeling Town Hall to suggest improvements in the Municipality. One of the Resolutions on the agenda was that it was desirable to put women on the same footing as men in municipal matters. This Resolution was proposed by Mrs. Sirkar, Principal of a much respected Hindu girls' school, seconded by Miss L. Ghose, B.A., niece of the famous Aurobinda Ghose, vigorously opposed by the Secretary of the Hillmen's Association, and supported at length by Mrs. Cousins on behalf of the Women's Indian Association, also supported by a number of a local Bengali men, but finally opposed by a Muhammadan. On the voting the Chairman declared the Resolution carried. It was amusing to hear the same old arguments for and against votes for women being trotted out 7,000 feet above sea-level which one had heard forty years ago on the low levels of debates in the British Houses of Parliament! Geographical position does not make much difference in men. They always see themselves as much better fitted than women to receive privileges and responsibilities! And yet it been proved over and over again that it is only opportunity that reveals capability.

The Women's Movement in Bengal

A new Municipal Bill to apply to the whole Province of Bengal is to be introduced in the next session of the Bengal Legislative Council. It is extremely important that the franchise shall be extended to women by this Bill. In order that this provision shall be included Lady J. C. Bose and the Secretary of the Women's Indian Association interviewed Sir Surendranath Bannerji, the mover of the Bill, and received assurances of a satisfactory nature as to the procedure which will be taken so as to enfranchise the qualified women in each Bengal Municipality.

Great satisfaction is expressed at the fine work that is being undertaken for the eradication of malaria from her District by Miss Mac Leod, who was recently appointed the first Woman Municipal Commissioner in Bengal.

Burma

The Rangoon Times understands that Dr. Miss Kingsley intends standing for election for membership in the Rangoon Municipal Corporation in the vacancy created by the resignation of Mr. Ginwala. She will be the first lady to contest Municipal elections in Burma.

THE BUDDHIST NUNS OF THIBET

BY MAJOR FLETCHER, A. M. I. M. E

(British Buddhist Mission to Thibet)

[EDITOR'S NOTE: We are very fortunate in having been able to secure this article from one of the members of the British Buddhist Mission which last winter sought to visit Lhasa. The five members of the Mission were allowed to proceed only as far as Gyantze, the second largest city in that romantic and holy land of Thibet, so long entirely closed to foreigners. The information now published is made known to the outside world for the first time, and is particularly valuable in showing that the Thibetan Buddhists consider the sex of woman no barrier to the highest spiritual offices, a question which just now is much agitating Western religions. The author was an ardent supporter of the British suffragettes in the days of their most painful struggle for political justice, and his sympathies are equally with all phases of the Indian Women's aspirations for education and reforms.]

While we were journeying near Gyantze we were told of a famous "Gompa" or Temple where a large number of Buddhist nuns lived, and which was a great centre of learning and devotion. I heard so many accounts of the wonderful "abbess," or head of the Temple, that I decided to visit her, and see for myself the conditions under which these brave women lived.

I started early in the morning with my servant and we rode across a snowy, wind-swept plain till we came to a big range of mountains. Situated on the top of one of the highest peaks about 17,000 feet above sea-level I could see some small white buildings, and I was told that was our destination. To reach it, however, was a long and difficult climb, the path being so narrow and steep that we had to lead our horses most of the way and clamber up over the rocks and boulders. When we reached the top after a hard struggle owing to the rarified air, we were rewarded by a most magnificent view, in fact one of the finest I have ever seen. For miles there appeared to be a vast sea of mountains, all the peaks rising like waves on a gigantic ocean. The whole grandeur of the Himalayan ranges appeared to be beneath us and in the midst of such sublime magnificence and splendour, I seemed to melt into nothingness amidst the vastness of the scenery.

The convent, if such it can be called, was a number of white clay buildings in the centre of which was the big temple. This temple is dedicated to the Goddess Dolma—the Compassionate Mother, or "She who hears the cries of the world". This deity is much revered by the Thibetans and she corresponds very closely to the Virgin Mary of the Christian religion. To mothers and children she is especially sympathetic and helpful, and a prayer to the Mother Goddess is often written on paper and tied round the necks of Thibetan children as a charm for protection against accidents and evil spirits.

I was received in the courtyard by an old nun who conducted me into a big room and very politely told to seat myself on a kind of throne. After a few minutes several nuns came in and presented me with cups of tea and bowls of rice. The tea was of course Thibetan "chae" made of boiled tea-leaves, fat and butter. I was not then accustomed to its unpleasant taste, but out of

courtesy I gulped it down and tried to conceal the hideous grimaces its flavour produced. The rice I had to eat with chopsticks, and not knowing how to use them properly I dropped most of the rice on the floor! During the meal I conversed, through the interpreter, with the head nun, and we spent a pleasant time exchanging compliments, as is usual in Thibet, and talking about the Buddhas and salvation for all mankind.

When I had finished I was again conducted into the courtyard where to my surprise about a hundred children and nuns had gathered to see me. It was indeed most amusing. Many of the children had never seen a white man before and I really believe they thought I was one of the Great Gods they often prayed to who had come to visit them. They gazed at me with big staring eyes and open mouths,—simply spellbound and filled with awe. I was wearing a military tunic with the medal ribbons and when I gave pieces of the ribbon to some of the little tots they just jumped with delight and gratitude.

I now had a chance of examining some of the nuns and I must confess my feelings for them were of mingled admiration and sadness. I admired these brave women, living far from the world of strife and cruelty, spending their lives in prayer for humanity, and yet I was sad when I thought how little they really knew of the busy struggling world of men and women. The nuns were barefooted, wore long red dirty robes, and having cut off all their hair, protected their heads with small red sheepskin caps. Some of them would have been really good-looking, but for the fact that they had daubed their faces with red "kutch" or paint to show their disgust for worldly beauty and to destroy any attempt at vanity. Still, they were very kind, and their bright eyes shone forth compassion and spirituality. Not knowing their language I could only smile and bow, while they smiled and bowed in return as I made my way to the Great Temple.

In a room adjoining the Temple the "Sow Goddess," or female avatar, was waiting to receive me. She was a very old and infirm lady and was seated crosslegged on a small throne. With one hand she held a rosary and with the other was turning a prayer-wheel. I gave her the "three bows," that is prostrated myself before her three times, which I am sorry to confess I did very awkwardly, much to the amusement of some of the children. She then gave me the "two-handed" blessing, by extending both hands over my head, which is considered a very great honour and is eagerly sought for, as it is supposed to confer much good karma. We then conversed with the help of the interpreter on religious subjects, and she particularly asked about India and England. The old lady impressed me as being very intelligent and not without a sense of humour. One or two things I particularly noticed; as we took tea she always allowed me to drink first, and she always addressed me as "Your Honour"; while she spoke of herself as "your servant." This was considered to be a great honour to me, and my gratitude and even love seemed to pour out to this holy and enlightened woman.

This goddess is known to the Thibetans as an avatar, that is, she has renounced the bliss of Nirvana in order to help suffering humanity. She is supposed to be one of the physical bodies of the Goddess Dolma and ever pours love and compassion on the world. She is so sacred that she is never allowed to lie down, but must always sleep sitting up in a chair. She eats very little—merely a handful of rice daily,—and her touch is said to cure most malignant diseases.

She had ordered a religious service for me in the Temple, which was a most beautiful building containing three large images,—one of the Goddess Dolma and the other two, Sakyamuni and Maitreya—the next Buddha to enlighten the world. The nuns were all seated crosslegged on small cushions and after a deep gong had been sounded several times the singing began. It was weird and beautiful, the deep voices of the elder women alternating with the shrill sweet notes of the children. One chant I still remember:

> Om! Enlightened ones have arisen,
> Protectors of World, Saviours of Humanity.
> Before their lotus feet we bow.
> Peace to all worlds, Blessings on all that lives! Om!

Many small butter lamps were now burning on the altars, and clouds of incense filled the air. Still the singing went on, sometimes increasing to a huge volume of sound, and then dying away till it was scarcely audible. The effect seemed to me to be most weird and magical for the Thibetans have good voices and both tune and time had evidently been carefully studied.

Around the walls of the temple were big statues of Gods and Goddesses, and several mummies of previous abbesses. I was directed to throw a "hartak," or white scarf, in the lap of "Dolma." and to light one of the big butter lamps placed at her feet.

When the ceremony had finished I was shown another building which was used as a library. On the shelves were many sacred books which varied in size from a small pocket edition to huge tomes which would be difficult for a man to lift. These books were very different from those we are accustomed to, for they are all oblong in shape, the leaves being thin bark and the covers are flat pieces of wood which are generally beautifully carved and painted. Very few of the nuns could read these books, but they showed great reverence for them, and when a book was taken from a shelf, it was held above the head as a sign of respect and to show that they were standing under, or understanding, the contents thereof.

At a table some of the girls were making copies of the sacred writings. It is considered a great act of merit to copy passages from the 'Sutras' and to learn them by heart. They were also painting charms and prayers to be placed on the 'chortens' (sacred

walls) or by streams and lakes. At the end of every copy these words were written:—"May the merit of this work be given to help the unhappy sufferers in the three worlds."

It began to get late now, so as I had a long way to go I wanted to depart. They would not let me go however till I had had some more tea and cakes. I was then invited to turn the big prayer-wheel in the courtyard. This prayer-wheel was nearly 10 feet high and every time it revolved a big bell sounded. The outside of the wheel was beautifully worked in red and gold letters, and I turned it most vigorously hoping that the many prayers it contained would be answered. I then took another look at the beautiful statue of the Goddess Dolma, the overhead light streaming on her features giving her a most benign and compassionate appearance. In the courtyard the nuns and orphan children all crowded round me again, so that I admit I began to feel quite embarrassed. To show how little they knew of the world of teeming men and women I asked one of them if she had ever heard of England but she replied that she had not. Another said she thought it was a small village the other side of the "great range" (the Himalayas). I could not help feeling sorry for them, for despite their smiles and pleasant words, there was an air of sadness, a dull resignation to what they termed "the burden of existence."

I was told to notice how tame the animals and birds were in the vicinity of the Temple. On the walls of the buildings ravens and kites settled, and even walked among the women showing no signs of fear. They said that even bears and wolves will eat from the hands of the Sisters, because, as one of them said, "we are Buddhists and never harm any life".

And so after many salaams and good wishes I descended the steep path that led to the plains. On the way down I met three of the "travelling Sisters" who had just returned from a pilgrimage. These are very brave women for they often travel hundreds of miles on foot over snowy mountains and windy plains, sleeping in the open and risking the attacks of wild and dangerous animals. They are the real "sisters of mercy" in Thibet for they go from house to house visiting the sick, helping the infirm, and instructing children in the knowledge of the "Good Law". Often in most desolate places the traveller meets these Buddhist nuns going from village to village, and owing to their sanctity they are held in great respect by all the natives, and are never molested by the gangs of robbers who infest these districts.

It was quite dark when I arrived back in camp, but the memories of the day still lingered in my memory. As I looked towards the mountain top I could see a small speck of light and knew that some of the nuns were keeping their night vigil, turning the "Wheel of the Good Law" and invoking the "Compassionate Goddess" to "hear the cries of the unhappy sufferers in the three worlds."

THE WOMAN WITH GIFTS TO BRING

BY EDITH HOUGHTON HOOKER

[Seldom have the aims of Western feminism been better expressed than in the following extract from an article in "Equality Rights," the organ of the National Women's Party, which has its Headquarters in International House, the Capitol, Washington. They are ideals that pure and unprejudiced men and women all the world over will respond to and so we give them publicity in this Eastern hemisphere.]

What are the gifts that woman may bring to the race as the vindication of her freedom? Are there, in short, any gifts that will be withheld from humanity until feminism is victorious?

The clearest answer to this question is to be found in an analysis of the fundamental psychological difference between men and women both as they exist to-day and in their eventual potentialities. In all the natural world there is one outstanding difference between the male and the female destined to reach far beyond the confines of the law and to persist as long as life does. This centres in the fact of motherhood. The obvious circumstance that women are mothers and men are not, establishes a line of demarcation between the sexes so profound as to be impassable. In ages gone motherhood has been the chain that has bound woman to her subordination. A golden chain, perhaps, but none the less secure, preventing her from ranging far afield and binding her to hearth and home and husband, through need of physical protection and the means to a livelihood. Sensing by instinct, and not through shallow reason, her principal duty to the race as the life-giver, she was content to brood with clipped wings over her little flock, knowing that so she could best serve the Great Experimenter. Only with the organisation of the work of the home to a point where the sacrifice of her potential abilities is no longer necessary has she begun to let her interests reach out into the wider spheres heretofore preempted by her brother. Machinery, the factory system and the growth of the science of preventive medicine, until death no longer treads so swiftly on the feet of life, may be said to be the basis of the feminist movement. Until these advances were made, women were necessarily offered up as racial sacrifices. Now the wheel of fortune has taken another turn, and a vast amount of vital energy is available for racial use through the liberation of women from domestic drudgery and continual child-bearing.

Woman, the life-giver, might now, if she were really free, turn her efforts to the improvement and protection of the racial life and achieve the development of its utmost potentialities. Realising the value of life, since alone of her is its cost demanded, she might institute a new order of civilisation based upon peace, temperance, co-operation and morality. She might even extirpate the cancer of the social evil, and make the bitter price of virtue paid by the scarlet woman in the past, worth while. The values placed upon sex by women and by men are wholly different, and are part of the essential order of nature. To men, sex is largely a matter of mating, to women, sex is pre-eminently a matter of life.

It is this fact that is the vitalizing principle in the feminist movement. Women demand liberty blindly and unconsciously, as flowers turn to the sunshine, because the time has at last come when they may give their great gift of life to the world, pure and uncontaminated. They can solve and conquer the problem of the social evil, they can eliminate venereal disease, they can establish a single standard of morality and place sex beyond the reach of prostitution; they can make of marriage a veritable sacrament and raise the creation of children to the loftiest of human obligations, but they can never accomplish these things while the lash of economic dependence is still available in the hands of men to drive them back to submission. Love must be released from economic bondage before women will be free to fulfil their highest racial function.

The great mass of men, sensing in the feminist movement its true goal of sex-equality, turn from it with native repugnance, for they know by instinct that when women are economically free it will be no longer possible for them to satisfy their sensuous natures at the expense of the racial welfare. Woman being the greatest of all sources of pleasure to man, it is but natural that he should hesitate to let her escape his grasp. Yet time will tell that men as well as women will rejoice in the great gift that woman brings, for he as well as she will share in a glorified humanity.

In the detailed work for Equal Rights the significance of the movement is rarely caught sight of, but the heat of the opposition is a sufficient gauge of its world-wide importance.

The National Women's Party has embarked upon a quest never before attempted in the whole history of the world, and only to be won at unthinkable cost of obloquy and suffering. It is the quest of the New Race, the building of a nobler humanity, the reorganisation of the sex-life of mankind upon the intrinsic principles of Justice, Liberty and True Equality. No parasitic woman will share in this enterprise, no man who places his own pleasures before racial welfare will give it his sanction, but the rest of mankind, men as well as women, will join together to bring the cause to victory, for it is part of the essential order of evolution.

Training

Peggy had been to the circus, and, being somewhat naughty on return, her mother thought to improve the occasion. "Don't you think," said she, "that if dogs and ponies and monkeys can learn to obey so well, a little girl, who knows so much more than animals, should obey even more readily?" Peggy thought a moment, then said, "Yes, of course, if she had been as well trained."

THE CARE OF THE CHILD

BY E. A. JOHNSTON

The 20th Century may be looked upon as a golden age for the child. Probably never before has he received such careful physical, mental and moral training. It is one of the most beautiful sights in the world to see a laughing, healthy child, who is the joy and delight of his home.

With regard to the care of her children, India falls behind most European countries, and any one who has visited the *basties* must be saddened by the evidences of ignorance and neglect. It is quite a common thing to see children with sore eyes, probably covered with flies, and it is pathetic to see, as I have frequently done, a tiny child hiding its face on its arm because it cannot bear the light of the sun. It is a well-known fact that most of the cases of blindness, which unfortunately are so common in this country, are due to neglect in the early stages,—very often the child is not taken to the hospital until the sight is lost.

I have seen a small baby suffering from bronchitis, but the mother was taking no steps whatever to have the child treated; not only this, but she was keeping it in a dark, icy-cold room.

A great deal is being done in India in the way of child welfare work, and the scheme is an admirable one. It is an excellent thing to give advice to the mothers and to look after the delicate children, but this at best can only touch a small fraction of the population. It may be instructive therefore to go to the root of the matter and ask why is there so much dirt, neglect and suffering amongst the poor Indian children? The answer is not far to seek, it is because the majority of the Indian girls are uneducated, and most important of all, are given no instruction in hygiene and the care of the child.

Men are trained and carefully prepared to fulfil their particular duty in life; the girls are given no training at all, and yet they are expected to carry out successfully one of the most important, and at the same time, one of the most difficult and delicate tasks in the world, that of rearing healthy children. One mistake on the part of the mother may mean the loss of that frail little life, and lesser mistakes entail untold suffering on the unfortunate and helpless child. As I write this a child has been brought to me with both eyes closed with pus, and also suffering from some skin disease. She is unable to open her eyes or to lift her head and is covered with an unsightly eruption, truly a pitiable sight, and as far removed from the ideal of healthy, happy childhood as can well be imagined.

The question arises, how long is this state of things to continue?

Let no one imagine that it is inevitable or that such suffering cannot be avoided,—such is by no means the case. A determined and organised effort should be made to teach the poor Indian girls elementary hygiene and the care of the child.

It is not necessary to build schools, the teaching could be given under a tree, at any rate during the winter and summer seasons. If teachers are not available, they should be trained for the purpose.

It is impossible for India to take her rightful place amongst the nations of the world unless her women are given the elements of knowledge. The mother should be the centre of the home, all should look to her for help, guidance and support, but unless she is given some training, how can she fulfil her high mission?

The question is a vital one and fully deserves the attention of the elected representatives of the people. It is amply realised to-day that mother-craft does not come by intuition, but is an art that must be carefully acquired. Unless seed is sown, no sane man expects to reap a harvest. Unless instruction is given to the Indian girls, it is useless to expect that the next generation will receive the care and attention that are essential to their right development.

THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN THE VEDIC PERIOD

(B. C. 2000—1400)

BY C. GOWRI DEVI

The hereditary caste system did not exist in the Vedic times—(Rig. Veda IX, 112, 3), Father, mother and son are described as physician, corn-grinder, and composer of hymns. Every father of a family was his own priest and his home was his temple. There were no idols in the Rig-Veda times, no temples where the people congregate. The sacred fire was lighted in the house of every householder, and he chanted the beautiful and simple hymns, the national property. We have a pleasing picture of women who assisted at the sacrifices, ordered the necessary things, and prepared them with pestle and mortar and extracted the Soma juice. Wives joined their husbands, performed the sacrifice together and offered the oblations together, etc. (I, 131, 3; V, 43, 15) etc.

Still more grateful to us is the picture of cultured ladies who were themselves Rishis and composed hymns and performed sacrifices like men. For there were no unhealthy restrictions against women in those days, no attempt to keep them secluded or uneducated or debarred from their legitimate place in society. There is mention of veiled wives and brides, and no allusion to women being kept in seclusion. On the contrary, we meet them everywhere in their legitimate spheres of action taking a share in sacrifices and exercising their influence on society. We cherish the picture of the cultured lady Visvâvârâ, a pious lady who composed hymns, performed sacrifices, and with simple fervency invoked God to regulate and keep within virtuous bounds the mutual relations of married couples—(Rig. V, 28, 3). We meet with the names of other ladies also who were Rishis of the Rig-Veda.

There was no religious obligation that every girl must be married. On the contrary, we find allusions to unmarried women who remained in the homes of their fathers and naturally claimed and obtained a share of the paternal property—(Rig. II, 17, 7). On the other hand, we have frequent references to careful and industrious wives who superintended the arrangements of the house and, like the dawn, roused, and sent every one in the house to his work in the morning—(Rig. I, 124, 4) and who possessed those domestic virtues for which Hindu wives have always been noted from the earliest to the present times.

(To be continued)

CORRESPONDENCE

THE WOES OF A MOTHER

Dear Editor,

I am much grieved at the condition of the world around me. I am at a loss to know how children will grow into good characters. Instead of becoming sources of pleasure and happiness to parents children have become sources of misery. Through misery lives are shortened. In the good old times it is said that the son carried his parents on his shoulders on pilgrimage to Benares; that Sri Rama, to fulfil his father's word, went to live in forests; that the Pandavas to satisfy their mother wandered in the forests. On the other hand, in the India of to-day, it is regrettable that young folk do not seem to care for their parents; but their lives seem to be wasted in dishonesty and debauchery. Among the Sudras, drink has been on the increase: consequent ill-treatment of women, feuds and fights, and even murders. Both for Brahmanas and non-Brahmanas, we find coffee hotels rising up—one for every yard. Even Panchamas are engaged in preparing and selling cakes. This has become the prevailing trade. Children go away with money without the knowledge of the parents and also run into debt by the end of the month; and even run away with articles (valuables) from the house. These coffee clubs have become the ruin of families. Property is being encumbered and women are made miserable. Women are not entitled to their father's property nor to that of the father-in-law and mother-in-law. The son becomes the master of the property earned by the husband; he wastes it on drunken, immoral women and leaves the mother in misery. Such is the misery of the mother caused by the disobedience of the son. Of course men cannot indulge in adultery unless some women consent. Want of education for girls up to the age of 18 years, marriage of young girls, want of continence and chastity among young men, absence of true spiritual knowledge and resulting ignorance, all have resulted in the ill-treatment of wives and mothers and in the reckless and evil life of young men.

I believe that good and virtuous ladies alone will reform both men and women. The country cannot improve unless toddy shops, coffee shops and soda water shops decrease. I am unable to see how children will learn to respect their parents, how they can be made to turn away from their evil life.

Pardon me for writing in this strain, I have opened my heart and explained my difficulties to you, whom I regard as my nearest relation.

AN INDIAN MOTHER.

WOMEN THE WORLD OVER

China

Chinese women have not always been in subjection. In all ages there have been women who played important parts in State affairs, influencing the rise and fall of monarchs and dynasties, and even themselves becoming rulers of the Empire. Of the 1,628 volumes of the Chinese bibliographical dictionary, no fewer than 376 are devoted to the lives of celebrated Chinese women.

Siberia

Miss Elea Brandstrom, the "Angel of Siberia," in recognition of her remarkable and super-heroic work among prisoners of War in Siberia from 1914-1920, has been decorated by every country in Europe. Her decorations number 1,500. Miss Brandstrom, on her arrival in the United States to raise funds for her welfare work in Europe, was met by the news that she was recommended for the Nobel Peace Prize of $40,000,00. The required endorsment of the Norwegian Parliament is assured.

Japan

It is a welcome sign that a group of Japanese women are planning to study municipal administration. This is more important as a first step than feminist political movements. Nothing can be closer than the relations between women and municipal administration. Women who are in charge of kitchens ought to be deeply interested in the problems of waterworks, gas and electric supply, prices and taxation. It is no exaggeration to say that the question of municipal administration means the problem of the kitchens. The problems of hygiene, housing, public market and means of communication are of as much interest to them as many others. Thus viewed, we can safely say that the voices of women should claim a more attentive hearing from the municipal authorities than those of their husbands or brothers. In a sense, the women's suffrage movement must start from the interests of the kitchens. In other words, there is reason to believe that unless based on the interests of kitchens no feminist political movements can carry weight or command respect.

Palestine

At the last sitting of the World's Congress of Jewish Women in Vienna it was resolved to found a World League of Jewish Women and a central office for the protection of Jewish emigrants. Other resolutions adopted referred to the participation of Jewish women in the reconstruction of Palestine, to measures against the white slave traffic and Anti-Semitism, and to special protection of Jewish children and women.

Egypt

It is reported that American ministers will hand the Premier a petition signed by a thousand Egyptian women urging the introduction of prohibition, and the Premier has promised to submit the matter to Parliament.

A significant stage of the movement for the emancipation of Egyptian women was shown by the deputation of Egyptian women which attended the International Women's Conference in Rome. They are pledged to a programme which came as a surprise to Egyptians generally. Among their demands is one that women should have more freedom than they possess at present in their choice of husbands. They desire also a modification of the marriage laws aiming at the abolition of polygamy and of divorce without due cause. The women claim educational facilities and an improvement of the sanitary conditions of Egypt and they demand a campaign against the grosser forms of superstitions.

Sweden

A Bill is now before the Swedish Reichstag providing that women shall be admitted on an equal footing with men to all Governmental posts, including the Consular and Diplomatic Service, but excluding the Army and Navy and certain other positions, such as those of officials in prisons or in asylums for inebriates. It also provides that women may be ordained Ministers of the Church, and installed as such in any congregation where there is at least one man serving as pastor.

England

Dr. Marion Philips, chief Woman Officer of the Labour Party, and Miss Susan Lawrence, L. C. C., decided to travel by air to attend the Conference of Socialist and Labour Women at Hamburg. It was the largest Socialist Women's Conference ever held. Delegations came from almost every country in Europe, even from the new Nations created at Versailles.

In Parliament Sir J. Cory (Cardiff, S.) asked the Attorney-General how many women Justices of the Peace have been appointed to date? Sir Douglas McGarel Hogg replied that the number of women magistrates appointed to date is 1,034.

America

The National Women's Party in America is setting up a Complementary Parliament of women opposite the National Capitol at Washington. Its members will assemble there in December, when the regularly elected representatives of the people also will begin their session. There will be a House and a Senate organised on exactly the same lines as the real Parliament across the way, and it is planned to discuss simultaneously every question that Congress takes up, and to hold public hearings on pending Bills.

Australia

At a recent Anglican Synod in Sydney, a law authorising the election or appointment of women as churchwardens was passed. Women may also sit on the Church Councils.

TAMIL

நன்னடக்கை

BY T. V. GOPALASWAMI AIYAR

இக்காலத்தில் ஸ்திரீகள் பரோபகார விஷயமான பொதுக் காரியங்களில் பிரவிர்த்தித்து பொது விஷயங்களை கூட்டம் கூடி செய்வதிலும் குழந்தைகளை வளர்ப்பதிலும் தாங்கள் முதலில் தங்களை சீர்திருத்திக்கொள்ளவேண்டியது அதிக முக்கியமான காரியம். எந்தப் பொதுக்காரியம் செய்ய எத்தனித்தாலும், அவர்களிடத்தில் நன்னடக்கை இல்லாவிட்டால் அவர்கள் செய்யும் காரியம் பயன்படாது. ஆகையால் நன்னடக்கை என்றால் என்ன என்பதைக் குறித்து விசாரிப்போம்.

நன்னடக்கை என்பது என்ன தெரியாத விஷயமா! இதில் விசாரித்துத் தெரிந்துகொள்ளவேண்டியது என்ன பெரிய ஸங்கதி இருக்கிறது என்று எண்ணக்கூடும். சிலர் நன்னடக்கை என்பது பொய் சொல்லாமை, திருடாமை, முதலிய கெட்ட செய்கைகள் இல்லாமல் இருப்பது என்று நினைக்கக்கூடும். கெட்ட செய்கைகள் இல்லாமல் இருப்பது மாத்திரம் நன்னடக்கையாகமாட்டாது. இங்கிலீஷ் பாஷையில் (Gentleman) பிரபு, குலமகன், பெரிய மனுஷன் முதலிய பதங்களால் என்ன அபிப்பிராயம் விளக்கப்படுகிறதோ அவ்வளவு குணமும் நன்னடக்கை என்பதில் அடங்கியிருக்கிறது—இந்த மேன்மை படிப்பினால் மாத்திரம் கிடைக்கக்கூடியதல்ல. இதை ஆங்கிலத்தில் (Culture) ‘கல்சர்’ என்றும் சொல்வதுண்டு. இது வெகுவாய் நல்லவர்கள், மேன்மக்கள் முதலியவர்களுடைய பழக்கத்தாலும், இது விஷயமானபடியாலும் படித்த ஸங்கதிகளை அப்பியாஸத்துக்குக் கொண்டுவர முயற்சிப்பதாலும் உண்டாக வேண்டியது. மேன்மக்கள் என்பவர்களிடத்தில் மாறுபாடு என்பது இருக்காது. தேகம், மனது முதலியவைகள் பயிற்சி அடைந்து சீர்திருத்தப் பட்டிருக்கும். சாதாரணக் கற்களால் தளவரிசை போடப்பட்ட வீட்டிற்கும் வர்ண கற்களாலும், பளிங்குக்கற்களாலும், தளம் போடப்பட்ட கட்டத்திற்கும் எவ்வளவு வித்தியாசமோ அவ்வளவு வித்தியாசம் சாதாரணமாய் படித்தவர்களுக்கும் மேன்மக்களுக்கும் உண்டு. மேன்மக்கள் ஒவ்வொரு விஷயத்திலும் பயிற்சி பெற்றவர்கள். பார்க்கும்போது பார்வைக்கு ரமணீயமாய் இருப்பார். துர்க்குணங்கள் பூராவும் விலக்கப்பட்டிருக்கும். நற்குணங்களுக்கு மெருகு கொடுத்தாற்போல் இருக்கும். எந்த சங்கத்தின் சேர்ந்தாலும் அதற்குத் தகுந்தாப்போல் நடந்து கொள்வார். எந்த மனிதனிடமும் ஒத்து விரோதமன்னியில் நடந்து கொள்வார். இதரர்களுடைய துர்க்குணத்தால் இவர் மாறுதல் அடையார். இதரர்களிடத்தில் விரோதிக்கார். காரியத்தை கெடுத்துவிடார். இவருடைய ஒவ்வொரு அம்சமும் சீர்திருத்தப்பட்டிருக்கும். உபசாரவார்த்தைகளை பொறுக்கி எடுத்துப் பேசுவார். நடை உடை பாவனை எல்லாம் சீர்திருத்தம் அடைந்திருக்கும். பேசும் வார்த்தைகள் அழகாயும் ஸமயத்துக்கும் விஷயத்துக்கும் ஒத்ததாயும் இருக்கும். இவரையே எல்லாரும் மேற்கோளாக பாவித்து நடந்து வருவார்கள். இவர் மற்றவர்களுடன் ஒத்து நடப்பதுடன், இவருடைய நடத்தை எவ்வித குணத்தாருக்கும் இன்பத்தைத் தரும். ஜனங்கள் ஸகவாஸ யோக்கியமுள்ளவர்களாக இருக்க வேண்டுமானால் இந்த “கல்சர்” என்பது முக்கியமானது. படிப்பு மாத்திரம் போதுமானதல்ல. எந்த ஸங்கம் கூடினாலும் அதில் கூடியிருக்கும் ஜனங்கள் ஒருவரோடு ஒருவர் முரண்படாமல் இன்பமான வார்த்தைகள் ஆடியும் மனதில் மேன்மையான எண்ணங்களுடனும் கலந்து நாகரிகமாய் நடந்து கொள்ள வேண்டும். இந்த இயல்பே “கல்சர்” ஆகும்.

‘கல்சர்’ உள்ளவர்கள் பொய் சொல்லார்; ஈசுவரபக்தி உள்ளவர்களாயும், பெரியோர்களிடத்தில் வணக்கம் உள்ளவர்களாயும், பரிசுத்தமுள்ளவர்களாயும், நேர்வழியில் நடப்பவர்களாயும் எந்த ஜீவராசிகளுக்கும் தீங்கு செய்யாதவர்களாயும், உண்மையே பேசும் குணத்துடன் மிருதுவான பேச்சுள்ளவர்களாயும் வெருக்கும் மனம் நோவாமல் நடந்து கொள்பவர்களாயும் இப்படிப்பட்ட நற்செய்கை நற்குணங்கள் பொருந்தினவர்களாயுமிருப்பார்கள். மேற்சொல்லப்பட்ட ஒவ்வொரு குணத்தையும் எடுத்து அதன் விஷயத்தை சொல்லப்புகுந்தால் இந்த வியாசம் விஸ்தாரமாகி விடும். ஆகிலும் சிலவற்றை மாத்திரம் கூறுவது பொருந்தும்.

ஈசுவரபக்தி உள்ளவர்கள் என்பதனால் கோவிலுக்குப்போய் அங்கே குருக்கள், பட்டர்மார்களுக்கு தக்ஷிணை, காணிக்கை முதலியவை கொடுத்து பூசனை செய்ய வேண்டும் என்று அபிப்பிராயமல்ல. கடவுள் எங்குமிருக்கிறார், அவர் நாம் செய்யும் ஒவ்வொரு காரியங்களையும் யெண்ணும் ஒவ்வொரு எண்ணத்தையும் அறிவார், அவர் எந்த விடத்திலும் இருப்பதினால் சகல விதமான பிராணிகள் மனிதர்கள் முதலிய விடங்களிலும் விளங்குகிறார், எந்தப்பிராணிக்கும் மனிதனுக்கும் நன்மை செய்தாலும் தீமை செய்தாலும் அந்த நன்மையும் தீமையும் கடவுளுக்குச் செய்ததாகவேயாகும் என்ற எண்ணம் உண்டாகவேண்டும். இதுவே முக்கியமாக ஈசுவரபக்தி என்று சொல்லப்படவேண்டும். இந்த விஷயத்தையே நம்முடைய நூல்களில் முக்கியமாக வற்புறுத்தி சொல்லப்பட்டிருக்கிறது. நடவடிக்கையில் இந்த உண்மையை மறந்து கோவில்களுக்குப் போய் தேங்காயுடைத்து காணிக்கை செலுத்துவதே கடவுள் பக்தி என்று வழங்கி வருகிறது. இது உண்மையான பக்தியை உண்டாக்க ஒரு வழியாகுமேதவிர உண்மையான பக்தியாகமாட்டாது. பக்திக்கு முக்கியமானவைகளாக அநேக குணங்கள் சொல்லப்பட்டிருக்கின்றன. அவற்றில் பரோபகாரமும்: பூததயையும், அகங்காரமற்றிருத்தல் முதலிய நற்குணங்கள் முதன்மையானவைகளாக சொல்லப்பட்டிருக்கின்றன. பெரியோர்கள் என்றால் வயதில் பெரியவர்ளல்ல: எவரிடத்தில் சாத்விக குணம் மேலிட்டிருக்கிறதோ அவர் எந்த ஜாதியானாலும், எத்தேசத்தாரானாலும், ஸ்திரீயானாலும், புருஷரானாலும் பெரியவரே—ஞானம், பயிற்சி, கல்வி, குணம் முதலியவைகள் எவரிடத்தில் அதிகமாக விளங்குகின்றனவோ அவர்களே பெரியோர்கள். இந்தப் பெரியவர்களுடைய ஸங்கத்துக்கே ஸத்ஸங்கம் என்று பெயர். இந்த ஸத்ஸங்கத்தினால்தான் விசேஷமாக ‘கல்சர்’ என்பது உண்டாகிறது. இப்படியே ஒவ்வொரு குணத்தையும் எடுத்து சுருக்கிச் சொன்னாலும் கூட இந்த வியாஸம் விஸ்தாரமாகி விடுமாகையால், மிருதுவான வாக்கு பொய் சொல்லாமை என்பதைப்பற்றி பாரதத்தில் ஒரு கதை உண்டு. அதை இங்கு சொல்லி இந்த வியாஸத்தை நிறுத்துவோம். சிலர் ஸத்தியமே பேசுகிறோம் என்று கர்வவார்த்தையுடன் மிருதுவான வார்த்தைகள் அன்னியிலும் பிரயோஜனமில்லாமலும் வார்த்தைகளைப் பேசி சண்டை சச்சரவுகளைக் கிளப்பி விடுகிறார்கள். இது ‘கல்சர்’ உள்ளவர்கள் செய்கிற காரியமல்ல. கீழ்ப்பட்ட குலத்தில் வளர்ந்தவர்களுடைய குணமாகும். இது மேன்மக்களுடைய குணமாகமாட்டாது.

முன்னொருகாலத்தில் ஒரு முனிவர் இருந்தார் இவருக்கு ஒரு மனைவியும் ஒரு குழந்தையும் உண்டு. இவரிடத்தில் இராமன் என்றும் கிருஷ்ணன் என்றும் இரண்டு மாணாக்கர்கள் வித்தை கற்றுவந்தார்கள். ஒரு நாள் முனிவர் வெளியில் போயிருந்தார். குருபத்தினியும் தன் குழந்தையை உள்ளே தரையில் துயிலவிட்டு தண்ணீர் கொண்டுவா நதிக்குப்போய் விட்டாள். இந்த சமயத்தில் இராமனும் கிருஷ்ணனும் தலைக்கு ஒரு விரகு சுமையைக் கொண்டுவந்து குழந்தை படுத்திருப்பதைக் கவனியாமல் உள்ளே இராமன் ஒரு இடத்திலும் கிருஷ்ணன் ஒரு இடத்திலும் போட்டார்கள். கிருஷ்ணன் போட்ட சுமை குழந்தையேல் விழுந்து குழந்தை இறந்து விட்டது. தான் செய்த பிசகு கிருஷ்ணனுக்கு உடனே தெரிந்தது. தெரிந்தும் சும்மா விருந்துவிட்டான். கொஞ்சநேரம் கழித்து குருபத்தினி வந்து பார்த்தாள். குழந்தை இறந்து கிடந்தது. மனது வருத்தத்துடன் இராமனையும் கிருஷ்ணனையும் கேட்டாள். இராமன் குழந்தைமேல் விழுந்த சுமை தான் போட்ட

தல்லவென்று சொன்னான். அப்படியே கிருஷ்ணனும் அது தான் செய்த காரியமல்லவென்று சொல்லிவிட்டான். முனிவர் வந்தார். அவர் விசாரித்தார். அவரிடத்திலும் இருவரும் முன்போலவே சொல்லிவிட்டார்கள். முனிவர் இவர்களிடத்தில் பொய் சொல்லக்கூடாது உண்மையைச் சொன்னால் தெரியாத்தனத்தை மன்னிப்பதாகச் சொல்லியும் உண்மையை கிருஷ்ணன் சொல்லவில்லை. உடனே முனிவர் தவத்தில் உட்கார்ந்து யமனை வரும்படி வேண்டினார். கொஞ்சநேரம் சென்றதும் யமன் தோன்றி "என் என்னை அழைத்தாய், நான் சாட்சி சொல்ல வேண்டியது அவசியமில்லை. இராமன் பொய் சொல்லான்" என்று சொல்லிவிட்டு மறைந்து விட்டார். கிருஷ்ணன் குழந்தையைக் கொன்றான் என்றாவது, அவன் சொன்னது பொய் என்றாவது சொல்லவில்லை. ஏனெனில், இப்படிச் சொல்லுவது மிருதுவானவார்த்தையாகாது, என்று எண்ணி இராமன் பொய் சொல்லமாட்டான் என்று சொன்னார். ஆகையால் மேன்மக்கள் குற்றம் செய்தவர்களையும் கூடநேராகக் குற்றம் செய்தான் என்று தூஷியாமல் உண்மையை உரைப்பார்கள்.

சந்திரமதி

II

நமது நாட்டில் பிறந்த உத்தம பதிவிரதைகளில் சந்திரமதி ஒருவள். உண்மைக்கு நாயகமாய் விளங்கிய சத்தியத்தைக் காப்பாற்ற ராஜைசுவர்யத்தை விட்டு, உடல், பொருள், ஆவி, இம்மூன்றையும் தத்தம்செய்த உத்தமனாகிய அரிச்சந்திரனின் மனைவி. ஒருமனிதன் எவ்வளவு கஷ்டம் படக் கூடுமோ அவ்வளவு கஷ்டத்தையும் உண்மையைக் காப்பாற்ற சந்தோஷத்தோடு சகித்துவந்த பெரியோன். எக்காலத்தும் எந்த தேசத்திலும் எவ்வரசரும் தேடமுடியாதவொன்றைத் தேடின மஹான். சூர்ய சந்திரர்கள் இருக்கும் வரையிலும், கடவுளின் சக்தியானது உலகத்தில் வியாபகமாய் இருக்கும் வரையிலும் அப் புண்ய புருஷனுடைய பெயர் அழியாமல் நிற்கும்.

இவ்வுத்தம லக்ஷணங்களோடு கூடி விளங்கிய அரிச்சந்திரனின் மனைவியாகிய சந்திரமதி தன் மணாளன் எதைக் கொண்டு உலகத்தில் கீர்த்தி பெற்றானோ அதையே, தானும் கொண்டோர் உத்தமி. அரிச்சந்திரன் ஒருகால் மறதியாய் ஏதாவது ஒன்றை நியாயத்திற்கும், உண்மைக்கும் மாறாகச் செய்யத் துணிந்தாலும் அதை அவ்வாறு செய்யக் கூடாது என்று சொல்லும்படியான உத்தமி. கணவனையே தெய்வமாகக் கொண்டவள். சத்தியத்திற்காக எவ்வித கஷ்டத்தையும் சகிக்கக் கூடிய ஆற்றல் படைத்தவள். சத்தியத்தைக் காப்பாற்ற தன் அந்தஸ்தை நினையாள்; கடுஞ்சொல்லால் வைதாலும் அதை மனதில் வைத்துக் கொள்ளாள். கற்புக் கரசி.

காலகண்டன் வீட்டில் சந்திரமதி அடிமையாய் இருந்தாள். வீரவாகு என்னும்படியான புலையன் வீட்டில் அரிச்சந்திரன் அடிமையாய் இருந்தான். இவ்வாறிருக்க திடீரென்று தன் குமாரனாகிய லோகிதாக்ஷன் என்பவன் காட்டில் அரவம் தீண்டி இறந்தான் என்று சந்திரமதி கேள்விப்பட, போய் மைந்தனைப் பார்க்க வேண்டியவளாய் காலகண்டரை அணுகி,

"இறைவகேளரவந்தீண்டி என் மகன் இறந்தான் யானச்
சிறையிலே சேரற்குன்றன் திருவுளம் அறியேன்"

என்று தான் பிரதி தினமும் செய்ய வேண்டிய காரியங்கள் எல்லாவற்றையும் செய்து முடித்து விட்டு பாம்பினால் கடிபட்டு இறந்த மகனைப்பார்க்க உத்தரவளிக்க வேண்டுமாறு கேட்டாள். பிறகு காட்டிற்குச் சென்று அங்கு தன் மகனைக்கண்டு புலம்பி சுடுகாட்டில் கொண்டுபோய் தகனம் செய்யலாம் என்று எண்ணி அங்கே கொண்டுபோக கொள்ளிக் கட்டையும் நெருப்பும் கூட சுடுவதற்கு இல்லாது மிகவும் வருத்த மடைந்து கடவுளைத் தியானித்து, பிறகு அங்கே எறிந்து கொண்டிருந்த கட்டைகளைக் கொண்டு வந்து தன் மகனைத் தகனம் செய்ய எத்தனிக்கையில், அந்த சுடுகாட்டிற்குக் காவல் காத்துக் கொண்டிரு என்று வீரவாகுவால் அரிச்சந்திரன் அனுப்பப்பட்டிருந்தான். கால்பணமும் வாக்கரிசியும் கொடுக்காது பிணம் சுடக் கூடாது என்ற கட்டளையை முன்னிட்டு தன் மைந்தன் என்று தெரியாது பிணத்தைக் காலால் உதைக்க சந்திரமதி மிகவும் விசனமுற்றவளாய் நின்றாள். எதிரில் இருப்பவள் சந்திரமதி என்றும், உதைத்துத் தள்ளினது தன் மகன் என்று உடனே தெரிய வந்தது. பிறகு அரிச்சந்திரனும் தன் மனைவியோடு கூடி புலம்பி தம் விதியின் கருத்தை எண்ணி எண்ணி மனம் நொந்தனர்.

கால்பணமும் வாக்கரிசியும் கொண்டுவர வீட்டிற்குத் திரும்பிச் செல்லுகையில் தன் குழந்தையைப் போல் வழியில் காணப்பட அதைஎடுத்துக் கொண்டுபோக காசிராஜனது குழந்தை யொன்று காணாமற் போய்விட்டதால் அதைத் தேடிவரும்படி ஏவலாளர்களை அனுப்ப, அவர்கள் எங்கும் திரிந்து குழந்தை அகப்படாமையால் சந்திரமதி இருந்த காட்டிற்குவர இவள் குழந்தையும் கையுமாக இருப்பதைக் கண்டார்கள். இவள் தான் குழந்தையைத் திருடினவள் என்று நினைத்து அவளைக் கொல்லும்படியாகவும் சமயம் ஏற்படுகிறது.

இப்பேர்ப்பட்ட கஷ்டத்தை யெல்லாம் சந்திரமதி மிகவும் சந்தோஷமாகப் பொறுத்துக் கொண்டு,

"அற்புக் காழியனான் அரிச்சந்திரன்
விற்பப் போயின மேன்மை குலத்தொடும்
பொற்புப் போம் பொறைபோம் நிறைபோமென்றன,
கற்புப் போவ தென் ?"

அதாவது என்னுடைய காதலராகிய கருணை அரிச்சந்திரருடைய குலத்தின் மேன்மையானது என்னை எப்பொழுது விற்க ஆரம்பித்தாரோ அப்பொழுதே போய் விட்டது. அதனால் பணம், காசு, ராஜ்யம் முதலியவைகள் எல்லாம் போய் விடும். ஆனால் என்னுடைய 'கற்பு' எவ்வாறு போகும். என்றும்,

கடைசியில் அரிச்சந்திரனே தன்னுடைய சொந்த மனைவியாகிய சந்திரமதியைத் தன்னுடைய கையாலே வெட்டும்படி நேர்ந்தது. அந்தோ இதைவிட வேறு கொடுமையான காரியம் வேறு ஒன்றுண்டோ? இதற்கும் அரிச்சந்திரன் மனம் தளராது சத்தியத்தையே நம்பி மனைவியைக் கொல்ல வாளை ஓங்கிக் கொண்டிருக்கும் சமயத்தில்;

"பதியிழந்தனம்: பாலனை யிழந்தனம்; படைத்த
நிதியிழந்தனம்; இனி நமக்குளதென நினைக்கும்
கதி இழக்கினும் கட்டுரை இழக்கிலோம்"

ராஜ்யத்தை இழந்தோம்; மிகவும் அருமையாக வளர்த்து வந்த குமாரனை இழந்தோம்; கடவுளால் எங்களுக்கு கொடுக்கப்பட்ட நிதி அதாவது பணத்தை எல்லாம் இழந்தோம்; இப்படி எல்லாவற்றையும் இழந்து பிறகு கேவலம் இவ்வற்ப உயிருக்காக நாம் சொன்ன சொல்லிலிருந்து தவறோம் என்று கௌசிக முனிவனுக்குச் சொல்லி அனுப்பி விட்டு, அரிச்சந்திரன் தன் மனைவியை நோக்கி,

"வழக்கின் என்றும் நீ வழிபடு தெய்வத்தை வணங்கிக்
கிழக்கு நோக்கி ஈண்டிருக்க"

எப்பொழுதும் வழக்கமாக நீ தொழும் தெய்வத்தை வணங்கி கிழக்குப் பார்த்து நில், என்று சொல்ல, சந்திரமதி,

"என் ஆவி இழக்கற்கஞ்சி நீ அறம் வழுவேல்"

என்னுடைய கேவலமான இந்த உயிருக்காகப் பயந்து நீ தர்மத்தினின்றும் நழுவிவிடாதே, பின்னும் "பொருந்து நீத்தத்தில் புற்புத வாழ்வை நீ மெய்யென்று அருந்தவத்தையும் அறத்தையும் மெய்ம்மையையும் விடுத்து வருந்தல் மன்னவ, வழி வழி சிறக" நீரில் அடிக்கடி தோன்றி மறை

யும்படியான நீர்க்குமிழிகளுக்குச் சமமாக விருக்கும் கேவலமான இம்மானிட வாழ்வை மெய்யென்று இவ் வாழ்க்கையே நிலைபெற்றது என்று எண்ணி அரிய தபசையும், தர்ம நெறியையும் சத்தியத்தையும் விட்டு வருந்தாதே மன்னவா, உன்னுடைய, சத்தியத்தையேகொண்ட வம்சமானது என்றும் சிறந்து நிற்கட்டும் என்று சொன்னாள்.

சத்தியத்திற்காக தன் உயிரைத் திருணமாக நினைத்து கணவனையும் அவ்வாறு நினைக்கும்படி செய்த சந்திரமதியின் குணத்தை என்னென்று கூறுவது, எந்த தேசத்தில் எப்பொழுது இப்பேர்ப்பட்ட குணங்கள் உடைய பெண் இருந்திருக்கிறாள்? அரிச்சந்திரனின் சத்தியத்தை உலகத்தாருக்கு நன்கு போதிக்கத் தூண்டுகோலாய் இருந்தவள் சந்திரமதி.

உடனே அரிச்சந்திரன்,

"உலகுயிர்க்கெல்லாம் பசுபதி ஒரு முதலாயின்
அலகில் சீருடை அவன் மொழி மறையெனின்
அதன் கண் இலகறம்பல வற்றிலும் வாய்மை ஈடிலதேல்
விலகுறாமல் அவ்வாய்மையை விரதமாகக் கொள்ளின் யான்]
"நெறியின் அன்ன வென்றனை விடா நிறையிலெட்குள தேல்]
இறுதி இன்மையைப் பெறுக இல்லெனில் இவள் இறுதி
பெருக" என்று வாள் வீசினன்: பேதை தன்
கழுத்தில் மறுமணத்திடு மாலையாய் வீழ்ந்ததவ் வடிவாள்

கடவுள் ஒருவர் சகல உயிர்களுக் கெல்லாம் மேலாய் இருக்கிறார் என்பது உண்மையானால், பூலோகத்தில் அவருடைய வார்த்தையானது வேதம் என்பது உண்மையானால், அதில் தர்மங்கள் பலவற்றிலும் 'உண்மை' என்பது சிலாக்கியமானால் அந்த உண்மையையே நான் விரதமாகக் கொண்டிருந்தால்

உண்மையான கற்பு இச் சந்திரமதியாகிய என்னுடைய மனைவிக்கு இருக்குமாகில் இவள் உயிர் பிழைக்கட்டும்: இல்லாவிட்டால் இறக்கட்டும் என்று வாளை வீச அந்த வாளானது மணமாலையாக வீழ்ந்தது.

என்னே கற்பின் பெருமை!

C. N. Ananthasubban.

சமாசாரக் குறிப்புக்கள்.

ரோமாபுரியில் வோட்டுரிமைக்காக கூடின, ஸர்வ தேசீய ஸ்திரீகளின் காங்கிரஸ் பஹாஸபை:—இதற்கு 43 தேசங்களிலிருந்து ஆயிரத்துக்கு மேற்பட்டு வந்திருந்தவர்களுள் நாற்பது தேசத்தார்கள் தம் பிரதிநிதிகளை யனுப்பியிருந்தனர். இவற்றுள் இருபத்தைந்து தேசத்தில் ஏற்கெனவே ஸ்திரீகள் புருஷர்களைப் போலவே வோட்டுரிமை பெற்றிருக்கின்றனர். மற்றப் பதினைந்து தேசங்களில் அவ்வுரிமை சீக்கிரம் கிடைக்கும் நிலையில் பிரயத்தனம் செய்திருக்கிறார்கள். இந்தியாவில் புருஷர்களுக்குச் சமமான வோட்டுரிமை யளித்திருக்கும் சென்னை, பம்பாய், ஐக்கிய மாகாணங்களிலிருந்து எட்டுப் பிரதிநிதிகள் சென்றது இந்தியாவுக்குப் பெருமையே. ஆரம்பத்தில் நடந்த மீட்டிங்குகளுக்கே கீழ்நாட்டுப் பிரதிநிதிகள் வந்திருந்தது ஓர் முக்கிய விசேஷமாக ஐரோப்பிய வர்த்தமான பத்திரிகைகளிலெல்லாம் கூறப்பட்டிருக்கிறது. வெவ்வேறு தேசத்தார்களின் வெவ்வேறு ஸம்ப்ரதாயமான உடைகளும் அவற்றின் விசித்திர வர்ணங்களும் அம்மஹா சபைக்கு ஓர் அலங்காரமாக விருந்ததோடு பூமியின் 'நாநாதிக்குகளிலிருந்து வந்தவர்களுள் விளங்கிய பொது ஜகமத்யத்தையும் எடுத்துக் காட்டின. ஆஸ்டிரேலியா, தென் ஆப்பிரிக்கா, எகிப்து, ஜப்பான், சீனா, இந்தியா, பாலஸ்டைன், வட அமெரிக்கா, தென் அமெரிக்கா, எல்லா ஐரோப்பிய நாடுகள் இவற்றிலிருந்தெல்லாம் பிரதிநிதிகள் வந்திருந்தனர். புதிதாய் வோட்டுரிமை பெற்ற தேசத்தார்களை நல்வரவேற்பதற்கான தனி மீட்டிங்கில் மிஸ்ஸஸ் ஜினராஜதாஸர் மிஸ்ஸஸ் H. A. தாத்தா இவ்விருவரும் ஐவைந்து நிமிஷம் பேசினார்கள். அயர்லாந்தும், இந்தியாவும் அநேக அம்சங்களில் ஒரே தன்மையனவாயிருப்பதுபோல இரண்டு தேசங்களிலும் ஏககாலத்தில் ஸ்திரீகள் விடுதலை பெற்றதும் ஓர் அம்சம்.

மேற்படி காங்கிரஸ்ஸுக்குச் சென்ற பிரதிநிதியொருவரிடமிருந்து நேரிற்கிடைத்த சமாசாரம்:—இந்த காங்கிரஸ்ஸைப்பற்றி அடுத்த சஞ்சிகைக்கு மிஸ்ஸஸ் ஜினராஜதாஸரவர்கள் ஓர் வியாசம் எழுதுவதாகச் சொல்லியிருக்கிறார். இதன் மத்தியில் மிஸ்ஸஸ் தாத்தா அவர்கள் அனுப்பிய செய்தி பின் வருமாறு:—ஸர்வ தேசீயமான இந்த ஸமாஜத்தில் வோட்டுரிமை பெற்ற தேசங்களெல்லாம் ஒரு வகுப்பாகவும் பெறாத தேசங்கள் மற்றொரு வகுப்பாகவும் பிரிக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன. நம் இந்தியா இவ்விரண்டில் முதல் வகுப்பில் சேர்க்கப்பெற்றது. மேமீ 17உ காலையில் பிரதிநிதிகள் அனைவரும் தங்கள் தங்கள் தேசப்பெயர்களின் அகராதிக் கிரமமாய் நின்று ஓர் பெரிய ஊர்கோலம் ஏற்பாடு செய்து இத்தாலியா தேசத்து பிரதான மந்திரியை அவர் ஆபீஸில் போய் வரிசையாய்ப்பார்த்து வந்தனமளித்தனர். அப்பிரதான மந்திரியே வந்து காங்கிரஸ்ஸை ஆரம்பித்து அத்தேசத்து ஸ்திரீகளுக்கு முதலில் முனிசிப்பாலிட்டி வோட்டுரிமை கொடுத்துப் பிறகு மற்ற வோட்டுரிமைகளை கொடுப்பதாகக்கூறினர். காங்கிரஸ்ஸை, பார்த்தவர்கட்கு புத்திபுகட்டத்தக்கதாயிருந்தது. பிரதிதினமும் காலை 9-30 மணி முதல் ஒருமணி வரையும், மாலை 3 மணி முதல் 5-30 மணி வரையும் சில சமயம் 6-30 மணி வரையும் சபையின் காரியங்கள் நடைபெற்றன. இரவு 9 முதல் 11 மணி வரையும் மெம்பர்கள் கலந்துறவாடும்படியான ஏற்பாடுகள் இருந்தன. ரோமாபுரியதிபதியும் இத்தாலியாதேசத்தார்களும் தங்கள் ஸ்திரீ கமிட்டியார்களுமாக ரோமாபுரியில் சரித்திரப் பிரவித்தியானவிடங்களில் எங்களுக்கு உபசரணைகள் செய்தனர். பாலடைன்ஹில் என்ற அப்படிப்பட்ட ஓர் இடத்தில் பிரதான மந்திரியாகிய ஸிக்னர் மஸ்ஸோலினி என்பவர் இந்திய பிரதிநிதிகளாகிய எங்களை கைகுலுக்கினதோடு பலதரம் அங்கு எங்களை போட்டோகிராப்பிலும், சினிமேட்டோகிராப்பிலும் படம் பிடித்தார்கள். ஸர்வ தேசிய வித்தியாசாலை யொன்று உள்ள மேரி மலையில் எமக்கு ஒரு விருந்து ஏற்பாடு செய்யப்பட்டது. அங்கு ஒன்பது தேசாந்தரங்களிலிருந்து வித்யார்த்திகள் வந்திருக்கின்றனர். பிரதிநிதிகளாகிய எம்மை வரவேற்க அநேகர் பேசினர். மற்ற தேசத்தார்களிடத்து நல்லெண்ணமும் அன்பும் சமரஸ பாவமும் விருத்தியாகச் செய்வதே அவ் வித்தியாசாலையின் நோக்கம்.

பிரான்ஸ், இத்தாலியா, ஸ்விட்ஸர்லந்து, தென் அமெரிக்கா இத்தேசத்து ஸ்திரீகளுக்கும் அடுத்த காங்கிரஸ்ஸுக்குள் வோட்டுரிமை கிடைக்குமாறு மேற்படி சமாஜத்தார் முயலுவார்கள். சீனா, ஜப்பானிலிருந்தும் பிரதிநிதி ஒருவர் வந்திருந்தனர்.

மிஸ்ஸஸ் தாத்தா அவர்கள் மேலும் சொல்வது என்னவெனில்:—"1926-ல் அடுத்த காங்கிரஸ் கூடுவதற்குள் ஸர்வ தேசீயமான இந்த ஸ்திரீ ஸமாஜத்தின் கருத்துக்களும் காரிய முறைகளும் எவ்வளவோ விசாரிக்க கூடியதாயிருக்கும்.

ஆகையால் ஸ்திரீகள் வோட்டுரிமை பெறாத மற்ற இந்திய மாகாணங்களும் இதர தேசங்களுக் கொப்ப முன்னுக்கு வரவேண்டும். இந்தியாவில் அரைவாசிக்கு மேல் இவ்விஷயத்தில் சிரத்தையேயில்லை. அடுத்த காங்கிரஸுக்குள் இதர தேசங்களெல்லாம் புருஷர்கட்குச் சமானமான வோட்டுரிமை பெற்றிருக்குங் கால் இந்தியா மாத்திரம் பெண்மக்கட்கு வோட்டுரிமை கொடுக்கப்பட்ட சில மாகாணங்களைமட்டும் பேர் சொல்லிக்கொண்டு நிற்பது அழகாகுமா? பஞ்ஜாப்பிலும் மத்திய மாகாணங்களிலும் ஸ்திரீகளுக்கு வோட்டுரிமை கொடுக்க இனித் தாமசித்தால் காரியமில்லை.

காங்கிரஸ் ஸ்திரீகளின் கோரிக்கைகள்:— புருஷர்களுக்குச் சமமாய் ஸ்திரீகள் செய்யும் உத்தியோகங்களுக்கு சமமான சம்பளம் கொடுக்கப் படவேண்டும். விவாகமான ஸ்திரீகளுக்கு உத்தியோகம் பார்க்கும் சுதந்திரம் உண்டு. புருஷர்கட்குக் சமமான கல்வியும் பழக்கமும் ஸ்திரீகளுக்கும் அவசியம். ஸிவில் சர்விஸ் உள்பட எல்லா வுத்தியோகங்களுக்கும் ஸ்திரீகளும் பிரவேசிக்க பாத்தியதை உண்டு. விவாகமானவள் ஸ்வதேசத்து ஜாதியிலேயே இருந்து கொண்டாலும் இருக்கலாம். வேறு தேசத்து ஜாதியைத் தன்னுடையதாக ஸ்வீகரித்துக் கொண்டாலும் கொள்ளலாம். புருஷனும் மனைவியும் தத்தம் சொந்த ஸம்பாத்தியத்தைத் தத்தம் இச்சைப்படி செலவழித்துக்கொள்ளலாம் ஆயினும் மனைவிக்குப் புருஷனுடைய வருமானத்தில் எப்போதும் பாகமுண்டு. தாய்மார்களுக்கும் விதவைகளுக்கும் ஜீவனும்சத்துக் குரிய ஏற்பாடுகள் முனிசிப்பாலிட்டியாரோ ராஜாங்கத்தாரோ செய்தல் வேண்டும். யுத்தமே நடவா வண்ணம் சகல தேசஸ்தர்களும் "ஸர்வதேச ஐக்கிய சங்கத்திற்" சேரவேண்டும். என்று இத்தனை தீர்மானங்கள் நிறைவேற்றப் பட்டன.

ஓர் ஸ்திரீரத்னம் தேகவியோகமானார்-லேடி கான்ஸ்டன்ஸ் லிட்டன் என்பவருடைய மரணத்தால் ஸ்திரீ ஜாதியனைவர்க்கும் பெருநஷ்டம் உண்டாயிற்று என்று எண்ணலாம். இங்கிலாந்தில் ஸ்திரீகளின் வோட்டுரிமைக்காகச் சித்த வுறுதி கொண்டு முதன் முதல் சண்டையிட்ட பெண்மணிகளுள் இவரொருவர். அதற்காக அவர் இரண்டு தரம் சிறைப்படுத்தப் பட்டார். தம் அந்தஸ்து தெரிய வந்தால் ஜெயில் அதிகாரிகள் தமக்கொருவேளை சௌகரியம் செய்வார்களென்றெண்ணித் தாம் கேவலமான ஓர் வேலைக்காரியைப்போல் வேஷம் போட்டுக் கொண்டார். அதனால் அவர் பட்ட கஷ்டம் கணக்கற்றது. "சிறைகளும் சிறைவாவிகளும்" என்ற புஸ்தகமொன்று அவர் இயற்றியிருக்கிறார். அவருடைய உத்தம குணம் அவ்வழகிய ஆங்கிலப் புஸ்தகத்தால் வெளியாகிறது. இவ்வம்மணி பங்காளத்து கவர்னராகிய (Earl of Lytton) லிட்டன் பிரபு அவர்களின் சகோதரி. அக்கவர்னரவர்களுக்கு தம் சகோதரியின் பிரிவாற்றாமையின் வருத்தம் அதிகம். ஸ்திரீகளுக்காகவும், இழிவாய்த் தள்ளுண்டவர்களுக்காகவும் தம் ஆயுளையே அர்ப்பணம்செய்து பாடுபட்டவர் இவரை யறிந்தவர்களுக்கு, எல்லாம் இவருடைய அருமைக்குணத்தால் உற்ற நண்பராயிருந்தார். இந்திய ஸ்திரீகளிடத்தில் அவருக்கு மிக்க அநுதாபமுண்டு. "ஸ்திரீ தர்ம பத்திரிகையை" அவர் ஒழுங்காய் வாசித்து வந்ததோடு அடிக்கடி விசேஷமான சமாசாரமும் இதர பத்திரிகைகளிலிருந்து எடுத்தனுப்புவார். அவர் ஆத்மா சாந்தியடைவதாக.

டாக்டர் அன்னிபெஸண்டவர்கள்:—மூன்று வாரங்களுக்கதிகமாக கணுக்காலில் விஷக்கடியினால் அவர் தம் ஆசிரமத்தை விட்டு வெளியேறிச் சென்று அலுவல்களைக் கவனிக்க மாட்டாமல் இருக்கிறார். இது வேறெவ்விதமாகவாவது ஆபத்தாக முடியுமோ என்ற கவலை அவருடைய சிநேகிதர்களுக்கு மிகவும் அதிகமாயிருந்தது. நாற்பது வருஷமாக அவர் சாகபதார்த்தங்களையே உட்கொண்டு நியமமான வாழ்க்கையில் இருந்து வருகிறபடியாலும், அவர் சரீரம் ஏற்கெனவே நல்ல ஆரோக்கியமுடையதாகையாலும் நல்ல வேளையாக அவர் இவ்வெழுபத்து ஐந்தாம் வயதில் சீக்கிரம் குணமடைந்தது நமக்கோர் ஆச்சரியமான நற்செய்தியே. இன்னும் மிகப்பலஹீனமாகவே இருக்கிறாராயினும் தடங்கலில்லாமல் தம் காரியங்களைக் கவனித்து வருகிறார். அவருக்குக் கடவுள் சீக்கிரம் பூரண பலத்தையும் தீர்க்காயுளையும் கொடுத்தருளப் பிரார்த்திக்க வேண்டியது நம் கடமை. அவரைப்போல் தம் வாழ்நாளை இந்தியாவுக்கே அர்ப்பணம் செய்தவர் எத்தனைபேர் உளர்?

கிராமங்களின் கல்வி நிலைமை:—சென்னை ராஜதானியில் ஜனத்தொகை 500க்கு அதிகமா யுள்ளதான 4000 கிராமங்களில் பள்ளிக் கூடங்களே இல்லையாம். ஆரம்பப் படிப்பை விருத்தி செய்ய உதகமண்டலத்தில் நடந்த ஓர் கான்பரன்ஸில் நடந்த தீர்மானம் என்னவெனில் இன்னும் மூன்று வருஷத்துக்குள் இக் கிராமங்களிலெல்லாம் பள்ளிக்கூடங்களேற்படுத்துவதோடு, 10 வருஷத்துக்குள் சின்ன கிராமங்களிலும் பள்ளிக்கூடங்களேற்படுத்தித் தீரவேண்டும். என்பதேயாம். இச்சென்னை ராஜதானியில் பர்டா சம்பிரதாயம் இல்லை. ஆகையால் பத்து வயதுக் குட்பட்ட பையன்களும் பெண்களும் ஒரே உபாத்தியாயரிடம் ஒரே பள்ளிக்கூடத்தில் படித்து வருவதற்கும் ஆக்ஷேபம் இராது. இவ்வாரம்பக் கல்விச் சாலைகளுக்கு "பையன்களின் பள்ளிக்கூடமொன்று" பெயர் வைக்காமல், பொதுவாய் "குழந்தைகள் பள்ளிக்கூடம்" என்று பெயர் வைத்தால், அண்ணன் தம்பிகளுடனேயே அக்காள் தங்கைகளும் பள்ளிக்கூடத்திற்கு உடன் செல்வார்கள். இச்சிறு பிராயத்தில் குழந்தைகளுக்குள் ஸ்திரீ புருஷ பேதத்தை வளர்ப்பது நன்றல்ல. வருங்காலத்திய தாய்மாராகிய பெண் குழந்தைகளைப் படிப்பித்தால் அவர்கள் வீட்டிலிருப்பவர்களாகையால் குடும்பம் நன்மையடையும் வருங்காலத்திய தகப்பன்மாராகிய பையன்களைப் படிப்பித்தலால், அவர்கள் எப்போதும் வெளியேறிச் சம்பாத்தியம் செய்வோர்களாகையால் தங்கள் படிப்புத் தங்களுடனே சரி. தம் குழந்தை கள் பயன்பெற முடிகிறதில்லை. ஒவ்வொரு பட்டணத்திலும் கிராமத்திலுமுள்ள ஸ்திரீகள் தம் பெண் குழந்தைகளுக்கும் இப் பள்ளிக்கூடங்களைப் பயன்பெறச் செய்யவேண்டும் என்று சர்க்காரைக் கேட்கவேண்டுவது அவசியம்.

மலையாளத்துத் திய்யர்கள்:—ஸ்ரீ நாராயண பரிபால யோகம் என்ற திய்யர்களின் சங்கத்து 20-ஆம் வருஷக்கூட்டம் கொல்லத்தில் கூடியது. மேற்குக்கரையிலிருந்து வெகுவாய்ப் பிரதிநிதிகள் தம் குருவைத் தரிசிக்க வந்திருந்தனர். அச்சமயம் ஸ்ரீமதி மீனாக்ஷி அம்மாள், பி. ஏ., என்பவரை அக்ராஸனம் வகிக்கச்செய்து ஸ்திரீகளின் கான்பரன்ஸ் ஒன்று நடந்தது. அச்சமயம் அவர் பேசியது என்னவெனில், "நான் உங்கள் ஜாதியைச் சேர்ந்தவர்களென்பதற்காக என்னை அக்கிராஸனத்தில் அமர்த்தாதீர்கள். அப்படியானால் அது அற்ப புத்தி. இங்கிலீஷ் படிக்கவேண்டியது அவசியம். ஆயினும், இப்போது நாம் கவனிக்கவேண்டியது தொழிற் படிப்பு. மாதப் பத்திரிகையொன்று நடத்தப்படவேண்டும் அதில் நம் ஜாதிக்கு வேண்டிய அவசியங்களைப்பற்றி எழுதுவது நமக்குள் ஒற்றுமையையும், ஒத்துழைப்பையும் விருத்திசெய்யும். தொழிற்சாலைகளும் பெண் பாடசாலைகளும் நாம் ஏற்படுத்தல்வேண்டும். சிறு பெண்கள் யாவரும் ஏதாவதொரு தொழில் தேர்ச்சி பெற்று சுயாதீனர்களாவதற்குரிய தொழிற்சாலைகளை ஏற்படுத்தல்வேண்டும். முடிவுரையாகத் தாம் சொன்ன முறையில் கிளைச்சபைகள் ஏற்படுத்துவது முக்கியமெனச் சொன்னார்.

பெண்கள் படிப்பு விஷயமாகவும் ஸ்வஜாதீய விஷயங்களாகவும் தீர்மானங்கள் செய்யப்பட்டன. அச்சமயம் பெண்கல்வி நிதி ஏற்படுத்த அநேகம் ஸ்ரீமதிகள் பணம் கொடுத்தார்கள்.

TELUGU

వృత్తాంతములు, వ్యాఖ్యలు

గత మేమాసమున రోంనగరములో “స్త్రీస్వతంత్రతా సాధన పరిషత్” మహాసభ యొకటి జరిగినది. 43 దేశములనుండి దానికి స్త్రీ సభ్యులేతెంచియుండిరి. 40 జనాంగములకు చేరిన స్త్రీలు అచట సమావేశమైయుండిరి. ఈ నలుబదిలో 25 జనాంగములలో స్త్రీలకెన్నికాధికార మిదివరకే ప్రాప్తించియున్నది. మిగిలిన 15 జనాంగములలో ఎన్నికాధికారమునకుగాను స్త్రీలు ఇకను వేచియున్నారు. ఇండియాదేశమునుండి యీమహాసభకు స్త్రీలువెళ్ళియుండుట ఇదియే మొదటితూరి. మదరాసు, బొంబాయి, మరియు సంయుక్తాధిపత్యములనుండి యీ మహాసభకు స్త్రీలు వెళ్ళియుండిరి. ఈ మూడు అధిపత్యములలో స్త్రీలకు పురుషులతోపాటు ఎన్నికాధికారము ప్రాప్తించియున్నది. కేవలము వృద్ధియైన దేశముల తోపాటు ఇండియాదేశము సయితము ఇట్టి మహాసభకు ప్రతినిధులను పంపియుండుట చాల సంభ్రమకరమైయున్నది. ఆమహాసభ ఆరంభము చేయబడినపుడు పూర్వదేశములవారు ప్రదర్శించిన వైభవమును గురించి పాశ్చాత్య పత్రికలు బహుశ్లాఘ్యతరముగ వర్ణించియున్నవి. వేరువేరు జనాంగముల వారు ధరించియుండిన వెవ్వేరువిధమైన ఉడుపుల ఆసభకు నూతనవర్ణమును కలిగించి చూచుటకు చాల అందముగ నుండెను. భూమండలములోని వెవ్వేరు దేశపు స్త్రీలొకచోట సమావేశమగుటవలన పరస్పర మైత్రిప్రేమలు వృద్ధియగుటకవకాశము కలిగెను. ఆస్ట్రేలియా, దక్షిణాఫ్రికా, ఈజిప్టు, జపాన్, చైనా, ఇండియా, పాలస్టైన్, ఉత్తరమెరికాయు దక్షిణ అమెరికా మరియు ఐరోపాఖండపు సమస్త దేశములనుండియు స్త్రీ సభ్యులేతెంచియుండిరి. ఈమహాసభ గతసంవత్సరమున సమావేశమైనది మొదలు ఇంతవరకు నూతనముగ స్త్రీలకు ఎన్నికాధికారమును కలిగించినదేశములకు స్వాగతమిచ్చు సమయమున ఇండియాదేశపు తరఫున వెళ్ళియుండిన మిసస్ జినరాజదాసాగారును, మిసస్. హెచ్. ఎ. తాతాగారును, ఐదైదు నిమిషములు ఆమహాసభలో మాట్లాడిరి. అనేక విషయములలో సమానప్రతిపత్తి కలిగియుండు ఐర్లాండు మరియు ఇండియాదేశములు తమతమ స్త్రీలకేకకాలమున ఎన్నికాధికారము నిచ్చియుండుట అర్థసూచకమైయున్నది.

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మును సంచికకు మిసస్ జినరాజదాసాగారు పైసూచించిన మహాసభ విషయమై యొకవ్యాసమును వ్రాసిపంపెదమని తెలిపియున్నారు. ఈమధ్య మిసస్ తాతాగారిట్లు వ్రాసియున్నారు:—

“స్త్రీస్వతంత్రతాసాధనపరిషత్” వారు తమ మండలమును ఎన్నికాధికారము ప్రాప్తించిన దేశములు ఇంకను ప్రాప్తించకుండిన దేశములు అని రెండు భాగములుగా చేసియున్నారు. వాటిలో ఎన్నికాధికారము కలిగిన ఇండియాదేశపు అధిపత్యములను మొదటితరగతికి చేర్చియున్నారు. మే నెల 17 వ తేది ప్రాతఃకాలమున ఇటలీదేశపు మంత్రివర్యుని దర్శించునిమిత్తము మహాసభకేతెంచియుండిన స్త్రీసభ్యుల ఊరేగింపు జరిగినది. వారు మంత్రివర్యుని ఆఫీసులో దర్శించిరి. అక్షరక్రమము ననుసరించి దేశములు విభాగింపబడి ఆయా దేశములనుండి వచ్చియుండిన స్త్రీలు ఆయా అక్షరక్రమము ననుసరించి నిలిచి యుండిరి. సిన్యర్ ముసొలిని (Signor Mussolini) యను నామధేయమున బరగు ఇటలీదేశపు మంత్రివర్యుడు స్త్రీలకు ఎన్నికాధికారము నిచ్చుటకు తనకేలాటి అక్షేపణ లేదనియు, మొట్టమొదట తమదేశపు స్త్రీలకు పౌరసభలలో ఆయధికారమును కలుగచేయు ప్రయత్నమును తాను తనప్రభుత్వమువారు చేయుదుమనియు సెలవిచ్చిరి.

సమావేశ మహాసభ యంతయు చూచుటకు బహుముచ్చటగ యుండెను. ఉదయమున $9\frac{1}{2}$ గంట మొదలు $12\frac{1}{2}$ వరకును, అపరాహ్ణమున, 3-5 వరకు ఒకొకవేళ 6-30 గంటవరకును సభయొక్క కార్యము జరుగుచుండెను. ప్రతిదినము రాత్రి 9-11 గంటలవరకు యేదియో కొన్ని కార్యములు జరుపబడెను. రోంనగరపు ప్రధానపౌరుడును (Mayor) మరియు ఇతరపౌరులును, మరియు ఇటలీదేశపు స్త్రీ సమాజమువారును ఆనగరమున ప్రసిద్ధిగాంచియుండు ఐహాసిక్ ప్రదేశములలో (ప్యాలటైన్ కొండ మున్నగు ప్రదేశములలో) దేశదేశీయ స్త్రీ ప్రతినిధులను ఫలహారాదులచే సత్కరించిరి. మంత్రివర్యుడు ఇండియాదేశమునుండి వచ్చియుండిన స్త్రీ ప్రతినిధులకు కరస్పర్శనిచ్చి ఉపచరించెను. అనేక మారులు మాఫోటోలును ఎత్తినదేగాక శినీమాలో సయితము మారూపము లెత్తబడెను. 11 వ తేదినాడు “మాంటుమేరి” కొండలో ఉపాహారము మాకివ్వబడెను. ఇచట 9 వెవ్వేరు జనాంగములవారు చదువుకొను గొప్ప కాలేజీయున్నది. ప్రతినిధులగు మాకు సుస్వాగతమిచ్చు భాషణములచట యనేకములు జరిగెను. సర్వజనాంగములలోను, ప్రీతిని, మంచినమ్మకమును వృద్ధిచేసి సోదరభావమందు వ్యాపింపజేయుటయే ఈకాలేజీయొక్క ఆదర్శము.

ఫ్రాన్సు, ఇటలీ, స్విట్జర్లెండ్ మరియు దక్షిణ అమెరికా దేశములలో స్త్రీలకికను ఎన్నికాధికారము ప్రాప్తించలేదు. కావున రాబోవు సమావేశ సభలోపల ఈదేశములలో ఎక్కువ పనిచేయ తీర్మానించి యున్నాము. చైనా, జపాన్ దేశములనుండియు ఒక్కొక్క ప్రతినిధి వచ్చియుండెను.”

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మిసస్ తాతాగారు మరలనిట్లువ్రాయుచున్నారు. “ఈమహాసభ” మరల 1926 వ సంవత్సరమున సమావేశమగును. అంతలోపల ఇండియాదేశములో నంతటను స్త్రీలకు ఎన్నికాధికారము కలిగి, అప్పుడీ మహాసభయొక్క చట్టములు వ్యత్యాసముగుట నిశ్చయము కాన ఇండియాదేశపు సమస్త అధిపత్యములు ఇతరదేశములతోపాటు చేరుననియు నమ్ముచున్నారము. రాబోవు సంవత్సరములో ఇండియాదేశమితరదేశములకన్న వెనుకబడినచో లేక రాబోవు మహాసభకాలములోపల ఇండియాదేశమునకు సమానప్రతిపత్తి కలుగకున్నచో చాలశోచనీయమని తోచుచున్నది. మధ్యరాష్ట్రములలోను, పంజాబులోను స్త్రీలకు ఎన్నికాధికారమిచ్చుటకు కాలము వచ్చియున్నదని మాకు తోచెడిని.”

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రోంనగరమున సమావేశమైయుండిన స్త్రీలు సమానమైనపనికి స్త్రీపురుషులకుసమానమైన జీతము నివ్వవలయుననియు, వివాహమైన

స్త్రీలు సయితము పనిచేయుటకు హక్కు కలిగియున్నారనియు తీర్మానములను చేసిరి. పురుషులతో సమానముగా స్త్రీలకును విద్యాశిక్షల నిచ్చి, అన్ని ఉద్యోగములకును వారు ప్రవేశింపబడవలసినదనియు, సివిల్ సర్వీస్ మున్నగు గొప్పగొప్ప పనులకు వారికవకాశమివ్వవలయు ననియు తీర్మానించి పెండ్లియాడిన స్త్రీలు తమతమ జనాంగప్రజ్ఞను ఉంచుకొనుటకును, మార్చుకొనుటకును అధికారము కలిగియుండవలసినదనియు, ఇందునిమిత్తము స్త్రీస్వతంత్ర సాధన పరిషత్తులో జనాంగభాగము, సర్వజనాంగభాగమని రెండుభాగములుండవల యుననియు తీర్మానించిరి. భార్యాభర్తలు తమతమ సంపాదనను స్వంతముగ అనుభవించుటకు స్వతంత్రులై యుండవలయుననియు భర్తయొక్క ఆదాయమునకు భార్య సయితము భాగిగా యుండ వలయుననియు తీర్మానించిరి. విలంతువులను సంరక్షణ చేయుటకు యేర్పాటు చేయవలయుననియు తీర్మానించిరి. చివరకు సమస్త జనాంగములవారును యుద్ధమును నిలుపుదల చేయుటకు సాధనముగానుండు "సర్వజనాంగసమితి" కిచేరవలయునని ప్రార్థించిరి.

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కాన్‌స్టెన్సు లిటిన్ ప్రభ్వీణిగారి అకాలమరణమువలన స్త్రీ ప్రపంచమునకే గొప్పనష్టము సంభవించియున్నది. ఇంగ్లాండులో స్త్రీల స్వాతంత్ర్యమునకుగాను పనిచేయుచుండిన స్త్రీలలో ఆమె అగ్రగామినియై అత్యుత్కట ప్రవర్తనము కలిగియుండెను. ఆమె స్త్రీస్వతంత్రోద్యమమునకై రెండవతూరి ఖైదనుభవించుచున్నపుడు ఆహారము తీసికొనక పోయినందున బలాత్కారముగ ఆహారము దేహమున చేర్చబడుచుండెను. తన హోదాను తెలిసికొని ఖైదులో తనకు ఎక్కువగా పరామరిక చేయుదురను తలంపుతో ఆమె తన నిజస్థితిని దాచుకొని కార్ఖాణలో పనిచేయు సామాన్య స్త్రీవలె వర్తించుచుండెను. "ఖైదులు మరియు ఖైదీలు" అను నామములో ప్రచురింపబడియుండు ఆమెగారి గ్రంథము ఇంగ్లీషుభాషలో చాల ముచ్చటగ నున్నది. ఆమెగారు బంగాళా గవర్నర్‌గారగు అర్ల్ ఆఫ్ లిటిన్ గారి సోదరి. తనసోదరియొక్క ఆకస్మిక మరణ వార్తచే వారు చాల వ్యసనాక్రాంతులై యున్నారు. ఆమెను చూచియున్న వారందరును ఆమెయొక్క పరిశుద్ధ చరితమును, మృదుస్వభావమును గుర్తించియే యున్నారు. ఆమెకు ఇండియాదేశము పైన పూర్ణాభిమానముండినందున "స్త్రీధర్మ" మునకు వార్తాపత్రికలలోని ముఖ్యవిషయములను వ్రాయుచుండెను.

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డాక్టర్ అనిబెసెంటమ్మగారికి యేదియో యొక విషపురుగు కరచినందున మూకాలువాచి చాల జబ్బుచేసి మూడువారములుగా తమ గదినివిడిచి రావడమునకు వీలులేకయుండెను. ఆజబ్బు అపాయకరముగా నుండెనని భీతిచెల్లి యుంటిమిగాని ఆమె గారు గడచిన 40 సంవత్సరములుగ సాత్వికాహారమును పుచ్చుకొనుచు నడచిన యుత్తమ జీవితమును, ఆమెగారి స్వాభావికమైన దేహారోగ్యమును, ఆమెగారి జబ్బును నివారించినవి. ఆమెగారికిపుడు 74 సంవత్సరముల వయస్సు. ఈ జబ్బులోనే ప్రయాణము చేసివచ్చిరి. ఇండియా దేశము యొక్క సేవకొరకే నివేదింపబడియుండు ఆమెగారి దేహము మరల నెక్కువ బలమును యారోగ్యమును పొందుగాకయని మన వాచకులందరు ప్రార్థింతురు గాక!

కడచిన 15 సంవత్సరములుగ సిమ్లాలో స్త్రీలకుగాను ఒక ఆస్పత్రిని కట్టించవలెనని మెడికల్ ఉద్యోగస్థులును, లోకోపకార పరాయణులును అనుకొనుచుండిరి గాని దీనిని నెరవేర్చుభాగ్యము రెడింగ్ ప్రభ్వీణిగారి కబ్బెను. ఖైవవిల్లిలో నొకస్థలమును సంపాదించి కట్టడమును కట్టుటకు రెడింగ్ ప్రభ్వీణిగారే అస్తిబారమును గతమాసము 15 వ తేదీన వేసినారు. ఈ ఆస్పత్రిలో మొట్టమొదలు సుమారు 50 మొదలు 60 వరకు రోగులుండుటకు వసతి చేయబడియున్నది. రెడింగ్ ప్రభ్వీణిగారి పేరట స్థాపింపబడియుండు "మహిళాభారతీయనిధి" నుండి దీనికి చాలినంత ద్రవ్యము సహాయము చేయబడుచున్నది. భోపాల్ దేశపు బీగంగారే 40,000 రూపాయిలను కట్టడమున కుచితముగా ఇచ్చియున్నారు. ఇండియాదేశములో స్త్రీలకు ప్రత్యేకముగా ఆస్పత్రులుండుటయు, చక్కగ శిక్షితులైన మంత్రసానులు, స్త్రీవైద్యులుండుటయు అత్యావశ్యకములై యున్నవి.

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మదరాసాధిపత్యమున ప్రాథమిక విద్యావిషయమును నాలోచించు నిమిత్తము సమావేశమై యున్నసభ వారికి, ఈ యాధిపత్యమున 500 పైగా ప్రజాసంఖ్యగల గ్రామములు 4000 వున్నవనియు, యీ గ్రామములలో విద్యాభ్యాసమునకు యేవిధమైన వసతియు లేదనియు తెలియవచ్చినది. మూడు సంవత్సరములలోపల యీ గ్రామములలోనంతయు బళ్లను స్థాపించవలసినదనియు, 10 సంవత్సరములలోపల చిన్న చిన్న గ్రామములలో సయితము బళ్లను స్థాపించవలసినదనియును తీర్మానింపబడెను. ఈ ఏర్పాటులో ప్రతిగ్రామమందును బాలురతోపాటు బాలికలకును విద్యాభ్యాసము గలుగుట కవకాశమును కలిగించుట యత్యవసరము. మదరాసాధిపత్యమున ఘోషాపద్ధతి లేదుగాన 10 సంవత్సరముల వయసులోపలనున్న బాలికలు బాలురతోపాటు ఒకటే పాఠశాలయందు చదువవచ్చును. దీనికేలాటి కష్టముండదని నమ్మెదము. విద్యాభ్యాసపు ఇలాఖాకు చేరిన ఉద్యోగస్థులు నిర్బంధములను నియమించకయున్నచో సోదర సోదరీలు కలిసి పాఠశాలలకు వెళ్లుటకు కష్టముండదు. ఇది "బాలుర పాఠశాల" యని బోర్డువేయుటచే బాలికలు దానికి పోజాలక యుందురు. ప్రాథమికవిద్యాశాలలలో ఇట్టి భేదమును కలిగించు పేర్లు వ్రాయకుండులాగున ప్రభుత్వమువారికి దేశాభిమానముగల స్త్రీలు విన్నవించుట యత్యవసరము. బాల బాలికలు అను భేదములను జూపించక "బిడ్డల పాఠశాలలు" అను పేరును వాడుకకు తేవలయును. తమ యాడుబిడ్డలు పాఠసాలలకు పంపునట్లు విద్యాధికారులు తలిదండ్రులకు ప్రోత్సాహము చేయవలయును. ముందు బిడ్డలనుకని పోషించు బాలికలను విద్యావంతులుగా చేసినచో కుటుంబమంతయు విద్యావిచక్షణలను కలిగియుండును. బాలురను మాత్రము విద్యావంతులుగ చేసినచో కుటుంబమునకుగాను వారెక్కువగ పనిచేయవలసి వచ్చుటయేగాక వారు వృద్ధియగుకాలమున కుటుంబమునుండి దూరము పోవలసివచ్చును. ప్రతి గ్రామ నగర పట్టణమందుండు స్త్రీలు, తమ తమ స్థలములలోని పాఠశాలలు బాలబాలికలకు సమానముగా నుండవలయునని సాధించవలయును.

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స్త్రీలకు ఎన్నికాధికారములు కలిగించు విషయములో చాల తీవ్రముగానుండు మిసెస్ కజిన్సుగారికి ముందుగా యేవిధమైన

యేర్పాటులేకనే ఈ విషయమున మాట్లాడవలసిన సంభవ మేర్పడినది ఆశ్చర్యకరముగ నున్నది. డార్జిలింగ్ పౌరసభ చాల ఆక్షేపణకు లోబడియున్నది. దానిని సవరించి వృద్ధిచేయు నిమిత్తము తగునైన యేర్పాటుల నాలోచించు నిమిత్తమొక గొప్పసభను పౌరసభకు పన్నునిచ్చువారి సంఘమువారు టౌన్ హాలులో యేర్పరచిరి. ఆసభలో తీర్మానింపవలసిన విషయములలో స్త్రీలను పురుషులతో సమానముగా నెంచవలసిన విషయ మొక్కటియైయుండెను. అచ్చట ప్రసిద్ధికెక్కిన యొక బాలికా పాఠశాలకు అధ్యక్షురాలగు (Principal) మిసెస్ సర్కార్ గారు ఈ విషయపు తీర్మానమును సూచించిరి. ఈ సూచనను ప్రసిద్ధుడగు అరవిందఘోస్ గారి మేనకోడలు ఎస్. ఎల్. ఘోస్., బి. ఎ., గారిచే యామోదింపబడి, హిల్‌మెన్సు అసోసియేషన్ (Hillmen's Association) కార్యదర్శిచే ప్రబలముగ ఎదురింపబడెను. మిసెస్ కజన్సు గారును, మరియు అచ్చటినివాసులగు బంగాళా పురుషులును యాతీర్మానము నామోదించిరి చివరకొక మహమ్మదీయునిచే మరల ఎదురింపబడెను. ఎన్నికలు తీసికొనగా, సదరు తీర్మానము బహుజన సభికులతో పోషింపబడి మంజూరై యున్నదని అగ్రాసనాధిపతిగారు సెలవిచ్చిరి. సమతలముననున్న లండన్ పార్లమెంటులో 40 సంవత్సరముల క్రిందట స్త్రీలకు ఎన్నికాధికారమును కలుగజేయు విషయములో వెల్లడిచేయబడిన అనుకూల ప్రతికూలకారణములే సముద్ర తీరమునకంటే 7000 అడుగుల పైభాగమందుగల పట్టణ నివాసులు సయితము యివ్వబడుచుండుట వినోదముగ నున్నది. భూ వ్యత్యాసము లున్నను మనుష్యస్వభావము ఎచ్చటను ఒకటేకదా! స్త్రీలకంటెను ఎక్కువ జవాబ్దారులను, హక్కులు కలిగియుండుటకు పురుషులు యోగ్యులని చెప్పుకొనుట వారికి సహజమై యున్నదిగాని అవకాశమిచ్చినచో స్త్రీలు సయితము పురుషులతో సమానముగను, కొన్ని సందర్భములలో అధికముగాను శక్తి ప్రదర్శనము చేయగలరనుటకు యెన్నియో దృష్టాంతములున్నవి.

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బంగాళా శాసనసభలో నూతన పౌరసభ చట్టమింతలో ప్రవేశపెట్టబడునని వినుచున్నారము. ఈ చట్టములో స్త్రీలకు ఎన్నికాధికారమును కలిగించుట యత్యవసరము. దీనిని చేర్చుటకుగాను జె. సి. బోస్ గారి ధర్మపత్నియును, మహిళా భారతీయ సమాజపు కార్యదర్శినియును సర్ సురేంద్రనాథ బానర్జీగారిని దర్శించిరి. వారీవిషయమును తృప్తికరముగా యంగీకరించి యోగ్యతగల స్త్రీలకు ఎన్నికాధికారమును కలిగించుటకు వలయు నియమములను చట్టములో చేర్చెదమని సెలవిచ్చియున్నారు.

హౌరాపౌరసభకు సభ్యురాలై నియమింపబడియుండు మిస్ మెక్‌లోడ్ గారు మంచి పనిచేయుచున్నారని వినుటకు చాల సంతసిల్లుచున్నారము.

ఎన్నికాధికారము, జవాబుదారి.

Responsibilities of Franchise

ప్రపంచమున ఎల్లయెడల స్త్రీలు తమ ఆత్మగౌరవమును ఎక్కుడుగ గమనించుచు, తమ హక్కులను గోరుటకు ప్రారంభించియున్నారు. పురాతన కాలమున, స్త్రీలు పురుషులతోడ సమాన పదవి చెందియుండి సమాన విద్యాసంపత్తులతో నొప్పియుండిరనుటకు కావలసినంత ప్రమాణములు కానవచ్చుచున్నవి. అయినను కాలక్రమమున ఏకారణము వలననో స్త్రీలు తమ ఔన్నత్యమును కొంతమట్టుకు పోగొట్టుకొని యున్నారు. ఇపుడు మరలి తమ ఔన్నత్యమును ఉద్ధారణ చేసికొను యత్నములు బాగుగ జరుగుచున్నవి గదా! పురుషులవలె స్త్రీలు రాజకీయవ్యవహారములయందు తమతమ అభిప్రాయములను వెల్లడిచేయుటకును, రాజ సభలయందు ప్రతినిధులను ఎన్నుకొనుటకును, స్త్రీలకు హక్కు కొంతమట్టుకు ఇయ్యబడియున్నది. ఇంకను అట్టి హక్కు విస్తారముగ ఒసంగబడును. ఇట్టి సమయమున స్త్రీలు తమ ధర్మమును చక్కగ నెరవేర్చుటకు చాలినంత ఆత్మసన్నాహము కావలెను. అట్టి సన్నాహ మెట్టిదో ఇంచుక విచారింతము.

(1) హక్కులు ఎల్లపుడును జవాబుదారితో చేరియుండును. హక్కులు హెచ్చుకొలదిని, స్వాతంత్ర్యము హెచ్చుకొలదిని, జవాబుదారిసహా హెచ్చును. తెలిసికొనదగిన విషయములును, చేయదగిన కార్యములును, ధరించదగిన భారమును ఎక్కువయగును.

ఈ దేశమున ఇంతవరకును సామాన్యముగ స్త్రీలు గృహకృత్యములయందే జోక్యము పుచ్చుకొనుచు, ఇతర రాజకీయాది వ్యవహారములయందు కొంచెమైనను సంబంధము కలిగించుకొనక యుండిరి. ఆభారమంతయు పురుషులపైననే యుంచబడియుండెను. అట్లుండుట కొంతలోపమేయను విషయము స్పష్టమైనది. దేశక్షేమకరములగు కొన్నివిషయములయందు పురుషులకంటె స్త్రీలకు ఎక్కువ విజ్ఞానము గలిగి, వారలచే సాధింపబడదగినవి గలవు. బాలికల విద్యావిషయము, గృహ, గ్రామ, పురపారిశుద్ధ్యము (Sanitation) కూలిపని చేయుటకు స్త్రీలను ఎంతమట్టుకు నియమించ వచ్చును, నియమింపబడిన స్త్రీల విషయములో ఏలాటినియమములు నిబంధనలు అవసరము, ఇట్లు కూలిపనిచేయు వారలలో, గర్భవతులు, బాలింతలు, లోనగు వారలకు, ఏలాటి సౌకర్యములకు ఏర్పాట్లు చేయదగును - ఈ మొదలగు విషయములు న్యాయముగను. ధర్మముగను దేశక్షేమ సాధనముగను తీర్మానించవలెననిన, అనుభవజ్ఞులును సాధువులును, అగు స్త్రీల అభిప్రాయము చాల అవసరము.

అయితే స్త్రీలు రాజసభలయందు, చట్ట నిర్మాణసభలయందును సభ్యులగుదురా? అట్లు కానిచో లాభ మేమని యోచనరావచ్చును.

స్త్రీలు ప్రత్యక్షముగ రాష్ట్రసభలలో సభ్యులుకాకపోయినను, రాష్ట్రసభలలోకి పోయి, చట్టముల నిర్మాణముచేయు ప్రజాప్రతినిధులను ఎన్నుకొను హక్కు కలుగగా, చట్టనిర్మాణ సభలయందు సభ్యులు కాగోరువారలలో తగినవారిని ఎన్నుకొనుటయందు స్త్రీలు తమ వివేకమును ఉపయోగించవచ్చును గదా! చట్టనిర్మాణ సభలో సభ్యులు కాగోరువారలు తమ యొద్దకువచ్చి తమ యెన్నికలను కోరునపుడు తాము కోరు సంస్కారములను చట్టములను కొనసాగించుటకు ఒప్పుకొను వారలను, జనులయొక్క క్షేమము కొరకు, పురోవృద్ధి కొరకును పాటుపడుటకు నిశ్చయించుకొని మాట యిచ్చువారలను మాత్రమే సభ్యులుగ ఎన్నుకొనుటవలన వారల ద్వారా స్త్రీలును పురుషులును తమతమ అభిప్రాయములకు ప్రాముఖ్యము నిచ్చునట్లగును. కావున సమీపకాలములో రాష్ట్రీయ చట్టనిర్మాణ

సభలకు సభ్యులను ఎన్నుకొను అవకాశము వచ్చుచున్నది. మొట్ట మొదట సర్కారునియమముల ప్రకారము సభ్యులను ఎన్నుకొను అధికారముగల వారందరు, పురుషులును స్త్రీలును సహా సర్కారు వారిచే, ఈమాసాంతములోపల ప్రచురించబడు పట్టీలలో (Voters' lists) తమపేరులున్నవా లేవా యని సకాలములో చూచుకొని పట్టీలో లోపములున్నచో అధికారులకు తెలిపి పేరులను పట్టీలో ఎక్కించునట్లు చేసికొనవలయును.

సామాన్యముగ, గ్రామాదులలో స్వంతముగాని కౌలుకు పుచ్చుకొనునదిగాని, భూమి శిస్తు రూ. 10-0-0లకు తక్కువలేక చెల్లించు వారందరును, పట్టణములయందు స్వంత ఇల్లుగాని, బాడుగకు పుచ్చుకొన్న ఇల్లుగాని, సంవత్సరమునకు రూ.10-0-0లకు తగ్గక ఇంటి పన్నుగాని, అట్లే భూమి పన్నుగాని, సంవత్సరమునకు రూ. 3-0-0 లకు పైబడి వృత్తి పన్ను (Profession tax) గాని, ఎంతైనను సరే వరుమానపు పన్ను (Income-tax) గాని చెల్లించువారు అందరను, పురుషులు, స్త్రీలు ఎన్నికల నిచ్చుటకు అర్హులు.

రెండవది ఎన్నుకొను అధికారముగలవారందరు, సభ్యులను ఎన్నుకొను దినము వచ్చినపుడు, తప్పక, ఉపేక్ష చేయక, ఎన్నుకొను స్థలము (Polling Station) నకు పోయి తమ తమ అభిప్రాయములను తెలిపి, యోగ్యులయినవారు సభలలో సభ్యులగునట్లు ప్రయత్నపడవలయును. సభ్యులను ఎన్నుకొనుటయందు యోచించ దగినవి, వారు ఏదేశస్థులు, ఏ మతస్థులు, ఏ జాతివారు, ఏ కులస్థులు అను విషయములు కావు. దేశ క్షేమమునకు, ఎక్కువగ పని చేయ గలవాడు ఎవడో వానిని ఎన్నుకొనవగును. కొంతమట్టుకు స్వార్థ త్యాగులయి, పరులక్షేమము కొరకు పాటుపడువారలను ఎన్నుకొనవలెను. అట్టివారు తెల్లవారైనను సరే, నల్లవారైనను సరే. హిందువులైనను సరే, మహమ్మదీయుడు, క్రైస్తవుడైనను సరే, భారతమాత యభివృద్ధికై పాటుపడువాడు కావలెను.

మూడవది. దేశముయొక్క ప్రస్తుత స్థితిగతులను పూర్వపు స్థితిగతులను, చక్కగ శోధించి, పూర్వపు పద్ధతులలో ఏవ్యేవి, శాశ్వత ధర్మములకు అనుకూలములగుటచేత, సార్వకాలికములగునో, అట్టిపద్ధతులను కాపాడుటకును, గత కాలమునకు తగియుండియు, ఇక్కాలమునకు తగనివి యుండినచో వానిని కాలానుసారముగ మార్చుటకును, గతకాలమునుండి, ఇక్కాలమునకు మార్పులు జరిగిన మార్గమును గమనించి, రాబోవు కాలమున ఎట్టి పద్ధతులు కావలసియుండునో యోచించి, వానికొరకు ప్రయత్నము చేయుటకును సాహసించవలెను. కావున స్వదేశ చరిత్రము ముఖ్యముగను, ఇరుగుపొరుగు దేశముల చరిత్రము కొంతమట్టుకును తెలిసికొనవలెను.

మఱియును, తమ శక్తికొలది, తాము నివసించు గ్రామములలోను, పట్టణములలోను, ఆయా స్థానిక సంఘముల కార్యములలో (అనగా యూనియన్ పంచాయతులు, గ్రామ పంచాయతులు, మ్యునిసిపాలిటీలు, తాలూకా బోర్డులు, జిల్లా బోర్డులు) జోక్యము పుచ్చుకొనుచు, తమ ఇరుగుపొరుగువారల క్షేమముకొరకు పాటుపడవలెను. స్వల్ప విషయములలో, దేశ సేవ చేయువారలకు ఎక్కువ అవకాశములు దొరకుటయే, ప్రతిఫలము. తమ గ్రామమునను తన మండలములోను, పరోపకార కార్యములయందు పూని పని చేయువారలు క్రమముగ రాష్ట్రీయ సభలలో సభ్యులయి, దేశ క్షేమము కొరకు పాటుపడు అవకాశములు కలుగును. ఇట్లు పెక్కు విధముల శక్తియొక్కరును, దేశ సేవకై పాటుపడుటకు అవకాశము వచ్చియున్నది. ఇతర దేశములయందు ఎందరో ఘనులగు స్త్రీలు, మానవతులు, పెక్కు సంవత్సరములు, విశేష శ్రమలకు పాల్పడి, సంపాదించిన యీ హక్కు మన దేశమున స్త్రీలకు సులభముగ అబ్బినది. ఆ హక్కును, ఉచితముగ విజ్ఞానముతో పూర్ణముగ ఉపయోగించి, ఇప్పుడు కొద్ది మందికి మాత్రము ప్రాప్తించియుండు హక్కును, ఎల్ల యువతులకును గలుగునట్లు చేయు భారము స్త్రీలపై యున్నది.

ఇవ్విషయమున పని చేయుటయే గొప్ప విద్య. గొప్ప పరిశ్రమము. గొప్ప శిక్ష. ఈ అవకాశము ఎంత ఎక్కువగ ఉపయోగింతురో, అంత ఎక్కువగ రాష్ట్రీయ వ్యవహార జ్ఞానము వృద్ధి అగును.

ఈ సమయమున భరత ఖండ స్త్రీలందరును, తమకు కలిగిన హక్కులను పూర్ణముగ తెలిసికొని, దానితోకూడ తమకు కలిగియుండు జవాబుదారిని పూర్ణముగ వహించి, దేశ సేవారూపమగు భగవత్కైంకర్యమును చేయుదురుగాక. ఇట్టి సమయములో స్త్రీలు చేయుపనియును, వారు వహించు భారము, పడునట్టి శ్రమయు, తమ కొరకుమాత్రము కాదు సుమా! వీరికి హక్కులను ఇచ్చినందున, వీరు వానిని చక్కగ వినియోగించిరి. కనుక స్త్రీలకందఱకు ఇట్టి హక్కులను ఇచ్చినచో దేశమునకు లాభమును, ధర్మప్రభుత్వమునకు సహాయమును అగుగదాయను అభిప్రాయము కలిగించి, తద్వారా రాబోవు తరముల వారి మార్గమును సులభముగ చేసినవారగుదురు. ఇవ్విషయమున జగదీశ్వరుడు భారతీయ స్త్రీలందరకు చాలినంత వివేక విజ్ఞానములను దేశాభిమానమును ఇచ్చి, దేశమును దేశీయులను కటాక్షించుగాత.

చిట్టమూరు రామయ్య.

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